

Lutheran World Federation

LWF STUDIES

THE OFFICE OF BISHOP

**Swedish
Lutheran - Roman Catholic
Dialogue**

THE OFFICE OF BISHOP
REPORT
of the
OFFICIAL WORKING GROUP FOR DIALOGUE
between the
CHURCH OF SWEDEN
and the
ROMAN CATHOLIC DIOCESE OF STOCKHOLM

Members of the working group

The Church of Sweden:

Olof Andren
Sven-Erik Brodd
Lars Eckerdal
Kjell-Ove Nilsson
Krister Stendahl

The Catholic Diocese of Stockholm:

Raymond Crochet
Frans Holin
Sven-Erik Pernler
Henrik Roelvink
Herman Seiler

Lutheran World Federation
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CH-1211 Geneva 2

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FOREWORD

The nature of the Office of Bishop and the function of bishops is a crucial issue in the ecumenical movement today. For Lutheran churches it is especially crucial since they have lived with structures ranging from the historic episcopate to radical congregationalism. The Office of Bishop is therefore a topic in inter-Lutheran discussion as well as in bilateral dialogues. In several member churches of the Lutheran World Federation ordained ministry is under formal study, but even in those not so engaged ministry is a perennial issue.

In recent years, bilateral dialogue documents have been important resources for theological discussion of ministry. Among Lutherans one thinks especially of the Lutheran-Roman Catholic *The Ministry in the Church* (1982) and the Anglican-Lutheran *Niagara Report* on episcopal ministry (1988).

Another important contribution which has been largely inaccessible to a wide readership is the Swedish Lutheran-Catholic document *Biskopsömbetet* (1988). With the cooperation of the Church of Sweden, the Lutheran World Federation is pleased to issue an English translation in LWF Reports so that this bilateral report may make its appropriate impact on the global ecumenical discussion.

Eugene L. Brand,
Assistant General Secretary for Ecumenical Affairs

Easter 1993

TABLE OF CONTENTS

FOREWORD by Eugene L. Brand	5
PREFACE by the Archbishop of the Church of Sweden and the Bishop of the Roman Catholic Diocese of Stockholm	11
 I. BACKGROUND - THE EARLIER DIALOGUES	
Introduction	13
How the Working Group Went about its Task	15
The Outline	16
 1. THE BILATERAL LUTHERAN-CATHOLIC DIALOGUE	
The Official Working Group for Dialogue between the Church of Sweden and the Catholic Diocese of Stockholm	19
Unofficial Talks between Lutheran and Catholic Theologians in Sweden	
Lutheran-Catholic Talks in Germany	20
Talks between the Roman Catholic Church and the Lutheran World Federation	21
Dialogue between Lutherans and Catholics in the USA	22
Theological Unity and Ecclesiastical Discord	23
 2. THE DISCUSSION OF THE OFFICE OF BISHOP IN THE LUTHERAN-CATHOLIC DIALOGUE - A SURVEY	
The Lutheran-Catholic Working Group from an International Perspective	25
Statements Concerning the Office of Bishop from the Lutheran-Catholic Dialogue: Documents GA (1980) and BEM (1982)	28
The Discussion about Apostolic Succession	32

II. HISTORICAL SURVEY

3. THE OFFICE OF BISHOP UP TO THE TIME OF THE REFORMATION	35
The Origin of the so-called Monepiscopate	36
The Special Authority of Bishops	
The Appointment of Bishops	37
The Office of Bishop in the Service of Unity	39
The Jurisdiction of Bishops	40
The Secular Power of Bishops	41
The Bishops in Medieval Sweden	42
4. THE OFFICE OF BISHOP FROM THE REFORMATION TO THE LATE 20TH CENTURY IN THE CHURCH OF SWEDEN	
Reappointments to the Vacant Sees and the Breach with Rome	45
The Royal Governing of the Church	46
Powerful Bishops at the Time when Sweden was a Great Power	
The Estate of Clergy and the Appointments of Bishops during the 18th Century	47
From Questioning to Revitalizing the Office of Bishop	49
Nathan Söderblom and the Ecumenical Movement	50
A New Ecclesiology?	51
5. THE OFFICE OF BISHOP IN THE ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH AFTER THE REFORMATION	
Self-Examination and Self-Reflection	55
The Catholic Reformation	57
Bishops of the Enlightenment, Episcopalists and Others	58
The Strengthening of the Pope's Primacy	60
A New Era	62
Sacramentality and Collegiality	63

III. FUNDAMENTAL PRINCIPLES

6. THE OFFICE OF BISHOP IN THE CHURCH

The Calling of the Church	67
The Church as Sacramental Community and as Institution	69
The Mission of the Church in the World	70
The Ministry of the Church and Ministry in the Church .	71
The Ministry as God's Gift in and for the Church	73
The Ministry of the Church as the Ministry of Jesus Christ	74
The Ministry of the Church as Ministry of the Spirit	77
The Ministry of the Church in its Various Forms	78
Episkopé and the Office of Bishop	81
The Office of Bishop and the Duty to be a Shepherd	83

7. THE CONSECRATION OF A BISHOP

The Calling to Ministry	85
Ordination to Ministry	
The Basic Structure of the Ordination Liturgy	87
The Liturgy of the Consecration of Bishop	89
Ordination and Installation	91

8. THE SACRAMENTAL CHARACTER OF THE OFFICE OF BISHOP

The Unity of the Ministry and the Three Forms of Service	95
The Church's Ministry as Sacrament	98
The Sacramentality of the Office of Bishop	103

9. APOSTOLIC SUCCESSION IN THE CHURCH AND IN ITS MINISTRY

The Church's Apostolicity and its Apostolic Ministry	107
The Two Aspects of Apostolicity Concerning Ministry	108
The Succession in Ordination to the Church's Ministry ...	110
The Succession of Office as Sign of and Means for the Apostolicity of the Church	112

The Collegiality of Bishops Around the Office of Peter	115
Defects in the Sacrament of Ordination	117

10. THE CHURCH AND ITS EPISCOPATE IN A DEMOCRATIC SOCIETY

An Institutional Church and the Responsibility of God's People	123
A Democratic Society	
The People's Sovereignty and the Church's Apostolicity ..	124
The Responsibility, the Rights and the Role of the People of God	126
The Office of Bishop and Democratic Forms in the Church	128

IV. CONCLUSIONS AND OUTLOOK

Introductory Remarks	131
Methodological Questions	132
Summary of the Content of Our Dialogue:	
A. The Essence of The Church	135
B. The Ordained Ministry	136
C. The Office of Bishop	139
D. The Consecration of Bishops	141
E. The Apostolicity of Ministry	142
F. Ministry and Democracy	144
G. Conclusion	145

V. EXCURSUSES ¹

<i>Sven-Erik Brodd</i> , The Swedish Church Ordinance 1571 and the Office of Bishop in an Ecumenical Context	147
Church of Sweden Manual: Ordination of a Bishop	159
List of Abbreviations	169

¹Three items from the original have been omitted in this edition.

PREFACE

Common ground for both the Roman Catholic Church and the Church of Sweden is a belief that the office of bishop, as a part of ordained ministry, is God the Holy Spirit's gift to the church. This is the foundation for the document here presented by the official working group for dialogue between the Church of Sweden and the Catholic Diocese of Stockholm.

Considerable agreement concerning the office of bishop has already been reported in international Lutheran-Catholic dialogue. The special tradition of the Church of Sweden has made it possible to further international insights concretely and in a positive spirit. We know already that our work has aroused interest outside of Sweden.

Ecumenical work does not mean a round of negotiations but is a mutual search for a deeper understanding of divine revelation. When we now hand over this document for study in our churches we recognize not only that our churches have come closer to one another, but we see it also as a reminder to us all of the ecumenical possibilities in the theological dialogue which is necessary for lasting ecumenical progress.

Five years' work has gone into this document. The dialogue between the Church of Sweden and the Catholic Diocese of Stockholm will continue. At this point, however, we think it is important that this unique document be studied and discussed among all Swedish Christians.

Uppsala and Stockholm, March 1988

Bertil Werkström
Archbishop of the
Church of Sweden

Hubertus Brandenburg
Bishop of the Roman
Catholic Diocese of Stockholm

I

BACKGROUND - THE EARLIER DIALOGUES

Introduction

This report is the third that the working group for dialogue between the Church of Sweden and the Catholic Diocese of Stockholm has presented for publication. The earlier reports, as well as a short history of the working group which began its dialogue in 1970, are dealt with in the chapter on bilateral Lutheran-Catholic dialogue (see below, p.19ff).

In 1981 it was decided that the working group should take up the subject of the bishop's office. The reasons given were three-fold: the office of bishop is of decisive ecumenical importance in the Roman Catholic Church; the Church of Sweden sees itself in a special situation ecumenically, claiming that its episcopate has apostolic succession; and episcopacy has been dealt with in various international documents yet without due attention to the Church of Sweden.

Furthermore, the subject of the office of bishop has recently become important in international ecumenical debate, far more than would have been expected just a few years ago.

In Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry (BEM), the official text issued by Faith and Order at the meeting in Lima in 1982, all churches that do not have an office of bishop with apostolic succession are urged "to appreciate the episcopal succession as a sign, though not a guarantee, of the continuity and unity of the Church" (38). It can be said about that whole document that it looks forward to a unity among the churches, including a common understanding of, and a similar praxis of episkopé - i.e., the functions of the episcopate.

In the Roman Catholic-Lutheran document *The Spiritual Office in the Church* (1981) the question of the office of bishop is

also discussed. Here too a tendency is observed to stress its importance for unity, and a desire to have this office accepted and introduced in as many Lutheran churches as possible is discernible.

A local bilateral working group must find a relevant and limited topic where more comprehensive ecumenical material can be applied to and elaborated within the local situation. Such, it seemed to us, is the topic of the office of bishop.

By historical and systematic study of divergent traditions, and by more penetrating theological and historical reflection, we hope to reach deeper unity or at least greater clarity. In addition there are problems common to both our traditions which have a bearing on the office of bishop. These include, for instance, how to apply the structure of episcopacy within and how to relate it to the structure of a democratic society; the nature of authority and its function in relation to the office of the bishop; and the role and function of the bishop in the church and the congregation.

Our method has been to utilize as fully as possible the results of the international and ecumenical dialogues while complementing them with some special studies of our own. The combined results constitute our report. Our own studies are also included as appendices when they aid the understanding of the document itself.

As for the Church of Sweden, it is true that its long tradition with episcopacy plays an important role in the ecumenical context. At the beginning of this century this was the basic assumption in our communications with the Church of England. It was very important for the Lutheran churches in the Baltic states when they received the historical episcopate through Nathan Söderblom. Finally, the Church of Sweden has played a decisive role on the mission fields in introducing the office of bishop to the Lutheran churches in Africa and Asia.

Thus the Church of Sweden has taken on a double role. By acknowledging *Confessio Augustana* it has adopted a Lutheran

profession, and by being aware of its history it thinks of itself as having maintained an episcopate with apostolic succession.

The Roman Catholic Church maintains that it holds an office of bishop with apostolic succession. (For the moment it seems unthinkable for Roman Catholics to recognize a presbyterial structure of office.) This is why the question of the office of bishop in the Church of Sweden is of fundamental importance for future relations between the two churches. This issue was earlier pursued by, among others, van den Haag and Dewailly.

Against the background of international dialogue and above all Lutheran-Catholic dialogue about ministry, the official working group of the Church of Sweden and the Catholic Diocese of Stockholm now perceives the possibility of taking the question further. The Lutheran-Catholic dialogue was earlier marked mainly by the fact that the partners in the dialogue had formally such different starting points: the Lutherans a presbyterial one, the Catholics an episcopal one. The episcopal Lutheran churches in Europe and in the third world, a minority within Lutheranism, can hardly be said to have made themselves heard. Since the Swedish situation now is such as it is, the dialogue can be characterized by formal parity in reference to episcopal order. Fundamental agreement concerning the view of ministry can be tested - particularly that one office superior to local office is an essential for the church (*cf.* All Under One Christ, 1980, §22).

How the Working Group Went about its Task

As a rule the working group held three meetings in the autumn and three in the spring. At times it met more often, and a few times it worked continuously for several days at a time. Between meetings the individual members did research or wrote drafts. This was standard procedure from the very beginning of the work in 1970. The members of the group know each other well. Some have worked together for more than a decade. Thus a positive atmosphere characterized by great openness developed. The discussions were frank and open

without anyone doubting the good will of the others. Any hint of a "negotiation mentality" was foreign to the group even during the most tense discussions. The aim has been to raise our theological awareness in order further to clarify the truth of revelation. Only through such a process can we attain a true and reliable unity.

The subject chosen in 1981 proved to be most demanding. When, after three years of trial and error, we had amassed a pile of written papers but had not yet found a unifying grasp of the subject, we decided to call it off for a while. In December 1984 the group had the opportunity to meet with both Archbishop Werkström and Bishop Brandenburg. They both told us that the work on the question of the office of bishop was urgent but the nature of the subject was such that it had to take its time. In May 1985 the outline was ready which on the whole was followed thereafter.

The course of action was for the most part the same as at the beginning of our work. Outlines were written and debated. Then completely new points of view often emerged and gave rise to new outlines which in turn had to be debated.

The Outline

The document we now present has five sections.

The first section contains a description of the work process, plus a survey, partly to place our work in the context of international dialogue, and partly to locate our handling of the subject of episcopacy within the context of international dialogue.

A historical section follows to clarify the various forms and content of the office of bishop. The section is divided into three parts. The first deals with developments up to the schism of the sixteenth century. Then follow developments within the Roman Catholic Church up to our day. Finally, developments in the Church of Sweden are presented. These traditions are thus dealt with separately. We are well aware of the impossibility of comparing developments in a worldwide church with

those in a small national church that lived in isolation during certain periods of history. Yet we found that this was probably the only way to describe the different phases of history. One approach to keeping the perspective for the Roman Catholic Church comparable to that for the Church of Sweden has been to describe, with some pragmatic criteria, developments in the Roman Catholic Church in some parts of Europe that are, to some extent, culturally and politically comparable to Sweden.

The group chose to work in a systematic section with the question of episcopacy primarily in relation to what the church is. This section begins with a definition of episcopacy as an office of the church. The question of consecration and of the sacramentality of the bishop's office is illuminated from the point of view of the sacramentality of the church, the apostolic succession and the constraints on episcopacy in a democratic age.

The document ends with a section in which we in the working group draw conclusions and sum up our work.

As an addendum to the document we publish some excurses to increase the reader's understanding of certain points that especially confronted the members of the working group. Finally, we add a list of abbreviations.

1. THE BILATERAL LUTHERAN-CATHOLIC DIALOGUE

It has recently become more common to abandon the rather unwieldy theological discussions when several churches come together for theological talks. A new trend can be noted in ecumenicity with the so-called bilateral talks, i.e., theological deliberations where only two denominations are involved. This has become a global phenomenon.

The Official Working Group for Dialogue between the Church of Sweden and the Catholic Diocese of Stockholm

The Archbishop of Uppsala and the Roman Catholic bishop of Stockholm together took the initiative in 1970 to form an ecumenical working group. This gave the group its official character. In 1980 its status changed somewhat since the members from the Church of Sweden were to be appointed by the Bishops' Council. From the beginning the group has consisted of ten members, all of them engaged both in the church and with research. After five years, in 1975, the working group presented its first document *The Christian View of Marriage and Family*. Its foreword was co-authored by Archbishop Sundby and Bishop Taylor. The book has been translated into German and English.

Our next document concerned baptism and church membership. It turned out that there were no diverging views within the group on this subject. Baptism is a prerequisite for membership in a Christian congregation. However, the working group found it urgent, in connection with the state-church investigation of 1978, to remind people of the ecumenical and international view on the subject. Hence the report, *The Ecumenical View of Baptism and Church Membership*, published in 1978.

Unofficial Talks between Lutheran and Catholic Theologians in Sweden

In 1980 the Bishops' Council commissioned the working group to clarify the position on a proposal for double church membership for some members of the Church of Sweden who also wanted to live in communion with the Roman Catholic diocese. Behind this proposition were years of impressive theological study. The conclusions can only be found, regrettably, in two documents presented as early as in 1973: *Catholic Faith in the Church of Sweden* (2nd ed., 1980), and *Dogmatic Distinctions Separating the Churches*.

Lutheran-Catholic Talks in Germany

The unofficial talks in Sweden between Lutheran and Catholic theologians had their origin in a German counterpart. As early as the end of the 1950s a number of Lutheran theologians associated with a group called "Sammlung" (which in the mid-1960s was succeeded by the "Bund für evangelisch-katholische Wiedervereinigung"), initiated Lutheran-Catholic dialogue. Directly or indirectly this group instigated further discussion, between 1975 and 1980, concerning the possibility of the Lutherans' chief confession, *Confessio Augustana* (CA), being accepted by the Roman Catholics. The idea was that the Roman Catholic theologians should produce an assessment of this Lutheran confession from their contemporary point of view. The Lutheran World Federation approved the proposition at a meeting in Uppsala in 1976, but no official Catholic interpretation of CA has yet been produced.

The dialogue between Lutheran and Roman Catholic theologians in Germany reached a climax in connection with the 450th anniversary of CA. The most important result of this dialogue may be the comprehensive volume *Confessio Augustana - Bekenntnis des einen Glaubens* in 1980. It is a scholarly commentary on the Lutherans' main confession in which each chapter is written by both a Lutheran and a Catholic theologian together.

The latest comprehensive document published by the official working group between the Catholic Bishops Conference in Germany and the United Evangelical Lutheran Church in Germany came in 1984 with the title *Kirchengemeinschaft in Wort und Sakrament*.

Talks between the Roman Catholic Church and the Lutheran World Federation

After the Second Vatican Council representative and official talks opened between the Lutheran World Federation and the Vatican Secretariat for Promoting Christian Unity. The first substantial result was the report, usually called the Malta report, *The Gospel and the Church* that the commission issued in 1972 after five years of study. It awakened lively discussion, but it reveals considerable convergence in one of the main questions of the Reformation, the Gospel. Next, these talks on an international and official level resulted in a document that concerned the Eucharist - *The Eucharist* - in 1979. Here again we note a considerable Lutheran-Catholic convergence, while at the same time it addresses the respective traditions on what they can do to improve the shared views that are the hallmark of the document. A Swedish translation with commentaries, made in 1982 by Lars Thunberg, was titled *Nattvarden, Herrens måltid*. As early as 1980 two other documents were published together, *Ways to Community* and *All Under One Christ*. The first document is a summary of the points on which Lutherans and Catholics have reached a unanimous agreement, and the second is a commentary on the CA.

An inclusive work on ministry from both a Lutheran and a Catholic perspective has also been published, titled *The Ministry in the Church*, in 1981. In 1983, the year of the Luther jubilee, the international working group published a joint statement on the reformer: *Martin Luther - Witness to Jesus Christ*. Finally, a summary of the results that have been reached in the Lutheran-Catholic dialogue was presented in the document *Facing Unity* in 1985.

Dialogue between Lutherans and Catholics in the USA

In the USA dialogue is being held between the USA National Committee of the Lutheran World Federation and the US Bishop's Committee for Ecumenical and Interreligious Affairs. The members of respective commissions are some of the USA's most outstanding theologians.

The discussions began in the mid-1960s. They have treated such questions as, for instance, their common interpretation of the Nicene Creed in *The Status of the Nicene Creed as Dogma of the Church* (1965), and of baptism in *One Baptism for the Remission of Sins* (1966). The Eucharist has been dealt with in two documents: *The Eucharist as Sacrament* (1965) and *Eucharist and Ministry* (1970, here abbreviated as EM). Four years later the commissions had finished their work on a traditionally sensitive subject, *Papal Primacy and the Universal Church* (1974).

All these documents from the Lutheran-Catholic dialogue in the USA contain both statements in which they agree and special statements in which they account for lingering differences. They also append scholarly investigation into different subjects.

Some other well-known Catholic and Protestant exegetes published yet another book concerning the question of the papacy, *Peter in the New Testament: A Collaborative Assessment by Protestant and Roman Catholic Scholars* (1973). This discussion of the papacy certainly advanced the view of the church's one ministry that Lutherans and Catholics have in common. But it also uncovered problems such as, for example, the conflict between persons invested with authority and those who hold teaching positions. That was the reason for the publication of the most comprehensive document so far, *Teaching Authority and Infallibility in the Church* (1979). Finally, within the framework for dialogue a document has been published which is analogous with the study of *Peter in the New Testament*, namely *Mary in the New Testament: A*

collaborative Assessment by Protestant and Roman Catholic Scholars (1978). The latest document in the Lutheran-Catholic dialogue in the USA is titled *Justification by Faith* (1985). It underlines the decisive agreement in what traditionally has been looked upon as a fundamental difference between Roman Catholic and Lutheran interpretations of Christianity - the question of justification by faith.

Theological Unity and Ecclesiastical Discord

The official dialogue that has been held between different bodies within the Roman Catholic Church and Lutheranism is characterized by the fact that most of the members in the different commissions are scholars. Thus the dialogue is characterized by strict methodology. That Roman Catholic and Lutheran theologians do research together within the framework of the dialogue opens new vistas and prepares for new solutions to old problems. As an example we might mention the 450-year-old controversy over the doctrine of justification by faith that now can be considered settled.

The great problem for the Lutheran-Catholic dialogue, as for all ecumenical dialogues seems to be that it still is so young. It has not yet found forms and frames for turning its theological gains into practice. This fact is the subject for comprehensive debate in the international community. Its technical term is "reception research." It can easily be proven that the results of the ecumenical dialogues between different denominations are being brought into the churches in different ways. Today the Church of Sweden, the Lutheran churches in the USA, the Anglican churches and the Roman Catholic Church display such similarities in their new orders for the mass that these can be said to belong to a single Western pattern. But formally the churches are not brought together. In a situation where we discuss whether the theological differences that remain between the different traditions really have to keep the churches apart, we do not discuss the structure of these churches. We are getting close to a situation that can be said

to be marked by theological convergence and denominational division. Perhaps the new dialogue between the Anglican churches and the Roman Catholic Church that has now been approved by the pope and the Archbishop of Canterbury can give guidance for the future. One of its charges is to give practical advice toward a reunion between the Roman Catholic and Anglican churches.

2. THE DISCUSSION OF THE OFFICE OF BISHOP IN THE LUTHERAN-CATHOLIC DIALOGUE - A SURVEY

The question of the status and importance of the office of bishop has been raised recently in the international ecumenical talks with surprising force and urgency. This situation makes our account of the subject timely.

The Lutheran-Catholic Working Group from an International Perspective

The group begins with the assumption that here we have two churches, each with an office of bishop, conferring with each other. Many incidents in the history of the Church of Sweden show the importance of the episcopacy. We can mention what happened in the sixteenth century when Gustavus Vasa clearly aimed at eliminating the office. The bishops stood their ground and strengthened their hold on the office. The office of bishop in the Church of Sweden has, moreover, played an important ecumenical role. That came to light during intercommunion talks with the Church of England at the beginning of this century. Since that time the Church of Sweden has cooperated in the introduction of episcopacy to churches in Europe, Africa and Asia.

The situation is complicated, however, because the Church of Sweden considers itself as part of the worldwide Lutheran community, and a majority of Lutheran churches lack the historical episcopate. The Church of Sweden seems on the one hand to claim the Lutheran view of freedom concerning the forms of ministry, and on the other, through its very actions, claims the historical episcopacy as being the ideal. This is, in short, the special problem in the relationship between the Roman Catholic Church and the Church of Sweden.

In the document Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry (BEM), episkopé is upheld to be a necessary function in the church. This function exists in all churches, and is exercised by

bishops, by a council of presbyters or by persons with other various titles. Episkopé is described in such terms that structurally it overlaps or coincides with the office of bishop. Thus, those churches which lack the office of bishop with historic succession are urged "to appreciate the episcopal succession as a sign, though not a guarantee, of the continuity and unity of the Church."

Two other documents have also appeared, published after the bilateral talks between the Roman Catholic Church and Lutheran churches - *Eucharist and Ministry* (1970, abbreviated as EM) published in the USA, and *The Ministry in the Church* (1981, abbreviated as GA after its German title), published in Germany and translated into Swedish. The question of episcopacy is discussed and its importance for unity is stressed. These documents express a wish that the office would be accepted and introduced in as many Lutheran churches as possible. But there is a tendency in the international community to think of this office as abnormal for Lutheran churches.

The dominant view in the Lutheran-Catholic documents concerning ministry, especially in GA, is to ignore Lutheran churches that by tradition (e.g., the Church of Sweden) or through a consciously taken step (e.g., the Lutheran churches in Estonia and Latvia, or various Lutheran churches in Africa) have adopted the historic episcopate (i.e., the office with apostolic succession). The reason that Lutherans have not reflected upon their tradition of having churches with the historic episcopate seems above all to rest upon the fact that the majority of Lutheran churches lack this form of episkopé.

Nor have they taken notice of the discussion within the World Council of Churches that produced BEM. It is true that BEM was published later than GA, but the discussions were held earlier. In this Lutheran-Catholic document the arguments give the impression that the matter of method belongs to an earlier stage in the ecumenical dialogue. Contemporary discussions must look forward to and deal with what is mutually enriching.

The fact that the Swedish office of bishop is not discussed in the bilateral documents does not match historical reality. After attaining their independence, churches in the mission fields have had to decide with which of the two Lutheran views they agreed, the German Lutherans or the Swedish Lutherans. The Swedish view for the most part prevailed and the historic office of bishop was introduced. The intercommunion agreement between the Church of England and the Church of Sweden raised some issues among different groups of German theologians and brought temporary strain into the relationship between German and Swedish Lutherans. The Swedish historic episcopate can result in a Swedish bishop not being allowed to take part in the consecration of Hungarian, Danish or Norwegian bishops. In the discussions held in the German Landeskirchen after World War I about introducing the office of bishop, the Swedish model was used as an argument both for and against this idea.

It can be said that still in some ecumenical circles within Lutheranism the Swedish model offers the possibility and, in certain cases, the desirability that the Lutheran community accept the historic office of bishop.

To sum up, some criticism must be made of the document that followed from the dialogue between Lutherans and Catholics (GA) since it does not take into account the discussion that has taken place in our time concerning the office of bishop within Lutheranism. Further criticism can be directed to the fact that it ignores the discussion that led to the introduction of the historic episcopate in African Lutheran churches. Instead, the discussion is marked by a rather one-sided view of the circumstances in Germany and the United States.

An attempt to give a survey of the positions between the Lutheran and the Roman Catholic traditions put forward in the dialogue shows:

1. that the Lutherans have been tending toward taking a positive position for the historic office of bishop, sometimes to the point of making it a *desideratum*;

2. that in discussions with the Reformed, individual Roman Catholic theologians and Reformed theologians have hinted at the possibility that a presbyterial ministry could be considered a genuine ministry, even from a Roman Catholic point of view;
3. that Lutherans in their method of dialogue have been too dependent upon the historical situation of the sixteenth century, from which vantage point they interpret their confessions and that interpretation becomes the basis for the dialogue with the Roman Catholic partners;
4. that the Roman Catholic theologians have thus been dragged into a history-oriented working pattern, although they would rather take their point of departure in contemporary discussion on the subject; and
5. that in the dialogue between Lutherans and Roman Catholics episcopacy is never questioned as an authentic office of the church.

The international Lutheran-Catholic dialogue is used by us in this document. The positive and negative descriptions concerning the functions and content of the office of bishop are put forward either as they have been proposed unanimously or as separate opinions. (It seems pointless that the Church of Sweden, for instance, takes on a contrived role as representing German Lutheranism.)

Statements Concerning the Office of Bishop from the Lutheran-Catholic Dialogue: Documents GA (1980) and BEM (1982)

The documents to which we refer belong to two different categories. They are both bilateral Lutheran-Catholic documents and multilateral documents that have been worked out by Roman Catholic and Lutheran theologians and to a certain extent are directed to these traditions, here summarized in BEM (1982).

If we try to sum up the intention of these documents concerning episcopacy, then EM works with a discussion of whether it is possible to parallelize the episcopal and the presbyterial structures within one differentiated framework of office founded on mutual recognition. GA can be said to touch the same subject. It lifts up the episkopé function as something which demolishes the divisions between the episcopal and the presbyterial traditions and partly accentuates the functions the two traditions have in common. BEM also takes up the question of the threefold ministry.

The significance of the historic episcopate varies in these documents. Both EM 21 and GA 42 state that the Lutheran Reformation wished to retain the office of bishop, but their attitudes toward the subject differ. In GA, the lack of the episcopate in the Lutheran tradition is described as a result of an "emergency situation," (42,43) but in EM we find no hints of such an emergency. Certainly EM 28 (separate writing by the Lutherans) asserts that the episcopal structure causes no problem for the Lutherans, but this is more in the tone of a concession than of a positive statement. The context declares that every form of ministry that promotes the preaching of the gospel is acceptable. It refers to the fact that different churches in the Lutheran tradition have different structures of ministry. The Church of Sweden represents the episcopal tradition. The document lacks GA's view that the office of bishop should be the normal order in the church, or the fact that episkopé, through its historical development, has been cut loose from the episcopacy (43). The American, democratic tradition is perhaps mirrored in 21, which proclaims that, according to Lutheran tradition, there is only "one order of ordained ministers" combining traits from both the old episcopate and the presbyterate. The pastor possesses the full ministry. Here we can see again that the contexts are different for GA and EM. GA takes up the question of the office of bishop directly, while EM works with the overarching question of the validity of ministerial office as a whole.

In both EM 20 and GA 41 the threefold ministry is portrayed as a structure from the early church and also typical for the Roman Catholic Church. It is interesting to note that BEM here takes a quite different line. Both GA 41 and BEM, Ministry 19, discuss the threefold ministry on the basis of the situation in the early church. BEM, in II Ministry, recommends the threefold ministry: "The threefold ministry of bishop, presbyter, and deacon may serve today as an expression of the unity we seek, and also as a means for achieving it." This ministry was the generally accepted model in the early church. It is still kept by many churches. There is a need for having the ordained ministry perform their tasks in their diaconal, presbyterial and episcopal aspects. As earlier GA, now BEM, in Ministry 23, claims that the episkopé-service "is necessary to express and safeguard the unity of the body."

In GA the tasks and the nature of the office of bishop are described in a language familiar to both Roman Catholics and Lutherans. The presupposition is here that they freely translate episkopé with "episcopacy," thus identifying the function with the form. The following functions are enumerated in GA 45: pastoral oversight, service for unity, practice of the teaching ministry, ordination, visitation, church discipline and (for the Roman Catholic Church) also confirmation. On principle concerning the office of bishop it can be said according to GA 45 that the difference between local and regional ministry is closely bound up with the essential nature of the church. It is not merely a result of human, historical development, or of certain sociological needs, but it is a result of the work by the Holy Spirit. The bishop's foremost duty is to preach the gospel to which he has submitted himself. He must also carry out a teaching ministry. He has been placed in the chain of witness of the whole church and is himself also a supervisor of the true faith and a defender of the gospel (50-70). Both Roman Catholics and the Evangelical Lutherans are aware that there are a number of problems in these statements, especially concerning the relation of the teaching ministry to theological

research on the one hand and to the congregation/church on the other.

In the lapidary description of the office of bishop in BEM, Ministry 29, we find a far-reaching agreement with GA. The difference might be that BEM underlines the importance of bishops for unity: "Catholicity and unity in the Church," "apostolicity and unity of the Church's teaching, worship, and sacramental life," "They relate the Christian community in their area to the wider Church, and the universal Church to their community."

A question pertinent for our talks is how people perceive the relationship between episcopal and presbyterial order. Is the basic structure of ministry the bishop or the local priest? In ecumenical settings the Church of Sweden is obliged to stress both that the historic episcopate is an important ecumenical instrument for unity and that the ministry of the church is also present in churches that lack the historic episcopate. The separate excursus by the Catholic theologians in EM 57 says that the Roman Catholic Church ought to recognize Lutheran presbyterial ordination (§5). At the same time they affirm that the ministry in a special way is preserved in the threefold ministry and they wish that the historic episcopacy for the sake of unity could be introduced to churches that do not now have it. This way of thinking seems to have made no impression on the Lutherans working on EM. Unity in that document is not taken further than stating that the structures of ministry in the two traditions can bring about the fundamental reality of the apostolic office. GA seems to be close to the Roman Catholic theologians in EM, claiming that according to Catholic views the Lutheran ministry fills important functions (§77 and §81ff). GA gives a clear recommendation to the Lutheran churches to reintroduce the episcopate and thereby reestablish the relation between bishop and episkopé (§47,80). Finally it can be said that the same basic views that were brought out by the Roman Catholic theologians in EM, GA (and the Church of Sweden) are also shared by BEM, Ministry 25.

The question of *ius divinum* and *ius humanum* - i.e., about divine or human rights regarding the office of bishop - is discussed both in GA and EM. The Roman Catholic theologians in EM begin by discussing a certain hesitation about the view of the office *iure divino* and raise certain question marks as a result of considering the material from the early church marking a difference between priest and bishop. They point also to Jerome and the fact that presbyterial ordinations - i.e., that a priest ordains a priest - had taken place (EM 40). Further, they note that the fathers at Trent rejected a proposal that only bishops could legitimately ordain those who were to administer the sacraments (§57). GA 41 joins in this hesitation concerning the status of the episcopate *iure divino*. They also refer to Jerome and note that the difference between priest and bishop until late medieval times was only a matter of jurisdiction. According to Catholic tradition, there is only one sacramental *ordo*, and the difference priest/bishop would only be *divina ordinatione* - i.e., through divine order, not *iure divino* (GA 48, cf. KO 1571, p. 100). When GA takes a stand concerning the episkopé function they choose to walk the middle of the road. They avoid the term *ius divinum* and paraphrase its content when taking a positive stand for it, using the term "human right." Thus GA affirms the episkopé function as belonging to the essence of the church (§42,45,47), while its concrete development should be seen as "human historical" against the background of the German reformation (§43). As we have seen, however, there is an effort in GA to hold together form and content (§47,80).

The Discussion about Apostolic Succession

Discussion concerning the view of apostolic succession place EM in a special niche in relation to GA and BEM since that document so expressly deals with the question of validity. In spite of having the material dealt with in appendices to EM ("Apostles and apostolic succession in the patristic era," James F. McCue, pp. 138-172; "Notes on the patristic era," Walter J. Burghardt, pp. 173-177; "A contemporary view on the apostolic

succession," Warren A. Quanbeck, pp. 178-188), there is no other Lutheran-Catholic document that in so positive a manner grapples with the apostolic succession in conjunction with the office of bishop. When the Lutherans state their position (EM 28) it takes the form of an admission. The episcopal succession was certainly desired by the Reformers and it can be found in "some" Lutheran traditions. The main position, however, goes as follows: "As long as the ordained ministry is retained, then all forms thereof that serve the preaching of the gospel are acceptable." The Roman Catholic theologians point to the uncertainty present in the historical material concerning the succession (EM 39ff.). They also give a positive evaluation of the Lutheran doctrinal succession (EM 44). They propose an acknowledgment of the Lutheran teaching ministry (EM 54). This is over against the background of a common Lutheran-Catholic view of *successio doctrinae*, the teaching succession, as the primary succession (EM 14f.).

BEM Ministry and GA are very much alike both in content and form. Both documents assume that apostolic succession is primarily material: "the apostolicity of the church from the point of view of content" (GA 60), "the apostolic tradition" (BEM Ministry 34). However, neither of the documents looks at the succession as an isolated doctrinal tradition. GA cautiously expresses it as "a succession in faith and life" (60) while BEM actually sees the succession as something that must be made concrete in the life of the whole church:

Witness to the apostolic faith, proclamation, and fresh interpretation of the Gospel, celebration of baptism and the eucharist, the transmission of ministerial responsibilities, communion in prayer, love, joy, and suffering, service to the sick and the needy, unity among the local churches and sharing the gifts which the Lord has given to each (BEM Ministry 34).

It seems that episcopal succession has a materially stronger position in BEM than in GA. In GA the succession of ministry is not directly a given part of apostolic succession but is

derived from it since "the witness of the Gospel is confined to the witnesses of the Gospel" (GA 61). The effects also turn out differently for GA and BEM in reference to the reintroduction of the office of bishop in non-episcopal churches. The Lutherans can only view a reintroduction in the greater context of unity in one and the same faith. The presupposition then is a unity of doctrine in the traditional Lutheran style:

To reintroduce the office of bishop with historic succession according to Lutheran interpretation should not be looked upon as an isolated act but be related to the unity of faith in the church as a witness to the universality of the Gospel of atonement (GA 66).

BEM Ministry 38, however, finds it valuable per se that the historic episcopacy is introduced to the churches as a step toward unity.

When reading the separate writings of the Catholic and the Lutheran theologians in GA it seems that they take their point of departure in different lines of inquiry. The Catholics write about a widening view of apostolic succession that comes with episcopal collegiality in the church (GA 62). The Lutheran theologians discuss how apostolic succession in Lutheranism came to be tied to "the right preaching of the Gospel," "that the sacraments are celebrated in accordance with the Gospel" (64). Here light is thrown on the origin of the formulation which we saw earlier had given rise to the reflection about the succession as "derived" from the Gospel: "On this basis the Lutheran churches have continued to ordain office bearer through office bearer" (64).

Finally, we think that BEM has many positive statements about the office of bishop that are missing in GA. The apostolic succession as linked to the office of bishop appears clearer in BEM as a sign of the unity and continuity of the church (36-38) and is seen as a part of the material succession and not merely as a potential means to channel it.

II

HISTORICAL SURVEY

3. THE OFFICE OF BISHOP UP TO THE TIME OF THE REFORMATION

The purpose of this and the two following chapters is not, as we have indicated above, to attempt to illustrate the history of the episcopate in all its aspects. We have instead chosen to relate selectively and briefly some important phases and critical periods which we consider of special interest for understanding the development in the Roman Catholic Church and the Church of Sweden leading up to our time and which clarify the background of our contemporary ecumenical talks.

We have chosen seven issues marking the first phase up to the time of the schism at the beginning of the sixteenth century:

- The origin of the so-called monepiscopate
- The special authority of the bishops
- The appointment of bishops
- The office of bishop in the service of unity
- The jurisdiction of bishops
- The temporal powers of bishops
- The bishops in medieval Sweden.

As for the six first issues we have decided to concentrate primarily on material from the history of the early church. The reason is that with the renewal of the last decades in other areas, for instance in liturgy, our churches have consciously re-established patterns from the early church or from early medieval times. This does not mean that the high- or late-medieval development is uninteresting or should be understood as decadent. History is not that simple. But

important principles concerning the office of bishop crystallized rather early in the history of the church and this heritage common to all Christians deserves special attention.

The Origin of the So-called Monepiscopate

By the term "monepiscopate" we understand a position of leadership held by one single person. This principle was by no means self-evident in the early church. On the contrary, there were many different models of leadership. The complicated and multifaceted situation at the time of the New Testament is described by Harald Riesenfeld in "Ämbetet i Nya Testamentet" (En bok om kyrkan, 1951, pp. 17-69). 1 Clement, which usually is dated c. 95 AD, speaks about *presbyteroi* and *episcopoi* in plural without distinguishing between the terms, while the letter of Ignatius from 110 AD urges monepiscopacy with great force. It is, however, obvious from some places in the Ignatian letters that monepiscopacy was questioned by some.

The claim for and the strength of monepiscopacy occurred during the second century when it became the most important tool of the church in the fight against Gnosticism. In addition the formation of the canon had begun (i.e., the decision of what should be considered authentic holy writ for the church) along with the decision as to what precisely should be the theology of the church. The bishops were seen as guarantors of the undiluted apostolic tradition. Every diocese introduced its own *series episcoporum* to strengthen its sense of belonging to the catholic church. (From now on we use the term "catholic" as Ignatius of Antioch did. He was the first to use the term in his writing about the church. For Ignatius the church is catholic because it is present everywhere and holds the fullness of God's saving grace. Its faith, teaching and life is an expression of the collected and common experience of Christians.)

Ignatius had already exhorted the congregations to rally around their bishop in order to withstand heresies. During this struggle the many different models of leadership from the

earliest period cease to exist and are replaced with the mon-episcopate. This monepiscopacy is later seldom questioned either in the early church or during the Middle Ages, no matter how much an individual incumbent in the office is disapproved of. It is commonly said that with Cyprian (martyred in 258) the development toward monepiscopacy is essentially completed. In him we meet a bishop responsible for a region where he is the leader of the priests and a model for his congregation.

The Special Authority of Bishops

From Hippolytus' ordination formula at the beginning of the third century, we learn that the special duty of a bishop is to lead the people of God and to perform ordinations. Here it is prescribed that the person who had been elected by all of God's people - i.e., by the local church - should be ordained on a Sunday by receiving the laying on of hands by some other bishops. The bishop had "apostolic spirit" - i.e., authority to lead the congregation and to be the leader of the priests. He had authority to give absolution and was principal liturgist. He should also be in charge of a specific geographic area. The bishop's duty as the first and foremost to preside in the Eucharist is described already by Ignatius: "That eucharist is valid that is celebrated by the bishop or the person to whom he gives the commission" (Smyrnaeans 8:1). The relation between bishop and presbyters that prevailed in the local parishes, according to Ignatius, came eventually to prevail also in the growing region where the bishop was the head. The presbyters then celebrated the Eucharist on the commission of the bishop.

The Appointment of Bishops

We learn from Hippolytus that in the beginning it was the Christian people, the congregation, who called the bishop. This order came to be modified in different ways, especially after Christianity had become a favored religion in the Roman Empire after the death of Emperor Constantine in 337. The

bishops of the provincial capitals in the east began to be called metropolitans or archbishops (originally the bishop of a provincial capital was called metropolitan, while archbishop was an honorary title for bishops held in especially high esteem). The election of a bishop had to be held in the presence of the metropolitan. He had to investigate whether the intended bishop measured up in his teaching and conduct of life. The participation of the people was limited to simple approval which, however, had great importance. Without approval there could be no ordination.

The bishops of the province had the responsibility of electing a metropolitan. As a sign of mutual collegiality the other metropolitans were to be informed. But, especially when the capital, Byzantium, was to have a new metropolitan, the emperor sometimes intervened. Chrysostom was thus abducted by the emperor's envoy from Antioch to Byzantium, but a few years later he was dismissed and exiled by the same emperor after a lot of intrigue at the court. The Emperor Justinian, who died in 565, limited the participation of the people at the elections of bishops to include only the aristocracy of the city.

In the west the metropolitanship developed later than in the Eastern church. The people and the priests cooperated for a long time in the election of bishops, and the people had a much greater influence. It is well known that Ambrose in 374 was called by the people of Milan to be their bishop. It is also told that the people of Rome in 590 broke into a monastery where Gregory was hiding to avoid becoming bishop.

In the west it was mostly the new German princely dynasties who tried to steer the election of bishops. Thereby they laid the foundation for the long-lasting tension between the church and the princely powers. For Otto the Great, who died in 973, to serve the church and to serve the state were merely two ways of expressing one and the same duty that had the same politico-religious aim. Otto considered that he himself through his coronation had a share in the office of bishop. And the German bishops became princes of the state.

The pope, on the other hand, had gained control over all the bishoprics in Italy. There the bishops were to be elected by the diocesan council and the election was to be approved by the pope. This stipulation was expanded eventually to be the rule for the whole western world but it was met by much opposition in various places. Through the so-called investiture controversy (see below) the church tried to defend its right to appoint its own bishops. But history shows that the princes also in the future quite often had influence as to who was to be appointed.

The Office of Bishop in the Service of Unity

Already Ignatius expresses the view that one of the duties of the bishop is to manifest the unity and presence of the local church. Where the bishop is, there is the church. In the bishop the whole congregation assembles, according to Ignatius. He also stresses the collegiality between the bishops strongly in this letter.

Similar thoughts are expressed also by Cyprian, bishop of Carthage from 248-258:

The Church does not leave Christ, and the Church is the people, united in the Church, and the flock that stays with its shepherd. Therefore you must understand that the bishop is in the Church and the Church is in the bishop, and if someone does not keep to the bishop he is not in the Church. (Ep. 69:8, PL4:406).

The episcopate is one and every individual bishop has a share in it in a single wholeness (*in solidum*). The Church is also one, and through a rich growth she spreads out near and far. (*De unitate ecclesiae*, 502).

Collegiality means a common responsibility for the unity of doctrine. Several neighboring bishops took part in the consecration of a new bishop and thereby guaranteed the passing on of the authentic Christian faith, at the same time as they embodied the wholeness of the church. All the bishops in the province and those of the more important bishoprics therefore

should be informed about an election of bishop. If a heretical person was recommended as bishop then no catholic bishops came to his consecration. Against the background of these thoughts and principles, the Council of Nicaea in 325 stated that at least three bishops had to participate in a consecration of a bishop. (It is a common misconception that this decision still is the rule today, but that is not the case.)

One expression of the service to unity, is, as mentioned above, the bishops' responsibility for doctrine. When doctrinal confusion occurred in the early church or in early medieval times, usually owing to some debatable or misleading statements by a bishop, then it was often a neighboring bishop who had to shoulder the brotherly responsibility of reproving his colleague. If these personal reprimands had no effect a concilium was called. Most of the councils that gathered were from geographically limited areas. Only seven were declared ecumenical - i.e., binding for the whole of Christianity.

The Jurisdiction of Bishops

The bishops' power to judge and arbitrate was from the beginning a spiritual power grounded in the power of the keys. The bishop held absolution in his hand as well as the conclusive decision in questions of life and faith. Among the ethical questions in which the bishops had to arbitrate were some that could be labelled secular as well as ecclesiastical concerns. In the beginning such jurisdiction functioned in the local congregation but later it came to cover the whole region.

Stressing that he was the successor of the Apostle Peter, Bishop Stephen in Rome in the middle of the third century claimed that his authority was the highest in the church. Cyprian, on the other hand, claimed that all the bishops together constituted the highest authority while the Bishop of Rome was *primus inter pares*.

The tendency of bishops in the capitals of the provinces to claim authority over the other bishops in their provinces

eventually became obvious, especially during the fourth century after the death of Constantine. We mentioned how the bishops in the east received the title of metropolitan with an ecclesiastical jurisdiction over the whole province. Some of the particularly highly esteemed bishoprics were to be called patriarchates - Alexandria, Antioch, Byzantium and Jerusalem. Byzantium soon claimed a rank above Alexandria when Constantine in the year 330 moved the capital of the Roman Empire from Rome to what was now to be called Constantinople. This move strengthened the status of the Roman bishop in the west and favored his claim to primacy. He was seen as the patriarch of the west by the church in the east. As long as they were in agreement the patriarchates looked upon each other as sister churches.

By the later part of the fourth century the boundaries between spiritual and secular jurisdiction became fluid, with the bishops being given more and more secular duties. Gratianus in the year 1140 includes *in potestas iurisdictionis* all the worldly and spiritual power that belongs to a metropolitan or bishop. Later canonical scholars use the term *potestas iurisdictionis* only for the church's spiritual governing power, and not for the sacramental ordination *potestas ordinis* or for the administration of its worldly possessions.

The Secular Power of Bishops

When the Emperor Constantine began to favor Christianity the bishops also began to receive privileges of various kinds. Among those privileges were that bishops in the west should be looked upon as equals to the senators. When the Roman Empire fell the bishops came to take on some civil jurisdiction. Thereby the office became desirable for members of the aristocracy.

This was especially the case in Germany where the bishops became lords over whole counties and received fiefs. This situation eventually caused the investiture controversy. It began with the German emperor who wanted a way to show that he

had the highest authority within the church. As a sign of this he himself gave both staff and ring to the bishop. The German-born Pope Gregory VII began the fight with Emperor Henry IV about this "simony." According to the pope's definition of simony it meant any worldly involvement in the bestowing of bishoprics. In the year 1077 Henry made his pilgrimage to Canossa, but the fight continued and was not arbitrated until the Concordat of Worms in 1122. There it was settled that bishops and abbots were to be elected canonically - that is, in the case of bishops, by the diocesan council with approval by the pope. After being elected the bishop received the regalia, that is his sceptre, from the king. Thus the king invested the bishop in his secular fiefdom. Thereafter the consecration took place. The controversy over investiture, however, was not primarily a fight between the powers of the pope and the king but a struggle for the freedom of the church to make its own decisions in spiritual matters.

It happened that, in order to swell their coffers, the bishops and other highly placed appointees in the church collected more than one office. It also happened, and rather frequently, that a bishop did not reside in his diocese. As early as around the year 400 several bishops stayed in Constantinople without having any special business to be there. This bad practice spread also to the west and both the accumulation of offices and absence from the diocese were forbidden at both the third and fourth Lateran Councils (1179 and 1215). This prohibition was, however, circumvented in many ways later.

The Bishops in Medieval Sweden

During the first Christian centuries in Sweden, soon after the time of the missionary bishops, the diocesan bishop would have been appointed through an election by the people, similar to what was written in the older Västgöta law. There were not yet any diocesan councils. The first was established in (Old) Uppsala when the archdiocese was founded in 1164. This council claimed it had the right to elect the bishop. It was

decided at the meeting at Skänninge in 1248 that a diocesan council should be established in all the dioceses and that these were to have the right to elect. But on several occasions the king made his will felt.

The papal reservation of bishoprics, by which the pope reserved for himself the final say in the appointment of bishops, gave the king a chance to propose his candidate directly to the pope. For example, the diocesan council, by acting swiftly, forestalled King Erik of Pomerania by appointing Olov Larsson in 1432. Olov, however, had to negotiate with the curia in Rome for a long time before he could begin his service. The victory of Engelbrekt finally opened the way and he was able to consecrate the cathedral as archbishop in 1435.

His successor Nicolaus Ragvaldi, on the other hand, got his appointment confirmed by the Council of Basel in 1438 and never visited Rome. Toward the end of the time of the union with Denmark both the lord protectors and the kings tried to influence the appointments of bishops.

The Archbishop of Lund was the primate in the north and the other bishops, including the Bishop of Uppsala, were his subordinates. Quite soon, however, Uppsala showed its independence. Folke Ängel received his pallium, the sign of the archbishop, directly from the pope in 1274 without the mediation of Lund. Especially during the fifteenth century the bishops reacted very strongly against the slightest hint on the part of Lund to remind them of its primacy. Sweden held its own provincial councils and Jakob Ulvson set down rules for the appointment of bishops which, among other things, stated that no bishop was to be appointed without the consent of the whole diocesan council. The aim of this rule was to make it impossible for the ruler of the country to have decisive influence on appointments.

The Swedish bishops had many fiefs and therefore many duties in the service of the country. They were, for instance, members of the king's council and at times they had to govern in the king's stead. Undoubtedly they played a major role in

the building of the Swedish state that slowly emerged out of the old county government. The political responsibilities and tasks of the bishops eventually became very extensive, often leading to conflicts which hardly benefitted the church.

4. THE OFFICE OF BISHOP FROM THE REFORMATION TO THE LATE 20TH CENTURY IN THE CHURCH OF SWEDEN

Reappointments to the Vacant Sees and the Breach with Rome

When Gustavus Vasa became the king of Sweden he had two distinct wishes concerning the church. One was to put an end to the political influence of the bishops. The other was to reach into the economic assets of the church in order to fill the empty public treasury. In the beginning Gustavus had no intention of breaking with Rome. But when Rome did not agree with his demand concerning the bishops and at about the same time the king had heard about the new ideas concerning the church from the Lutheran reformers he found the ideological basis to break with Rome and then to be able to direct developments.

Five of seven sees were vacant in Sweden, which gave the king an advantage. He could have let episcopacy die out and meanwhile arrange the governance of the church in some other way. But a number of factors forced him to refill the empty sees. One of them was the pressure from the common people. They demanded new bishops. In spite of some bishops not having been the best stewards of their dioceses, the office itself was apparently deeply rooted in the mind of the people. Another factor was the coronation. A coronation of a king had to be performed by a number of bishops. In the year 1524 the director of the Birgitta House in Rome, Petrus Magni, was elected and consecrated Bishop of Västerås after due confirmation. This Petrus Magni was forced to consecrate three other bishops in 1527, owing to the king's insistence, but without papal confirmation. The coronation was to take place that same year. The negotiations with Rome to replace Gustav Trolle with the papal envoy Johannes Magni had gone on for some time but without result.

A decisive step was taken in 1531 when Laurentius Petri was chosen to be archbishop and was consecrated by Petrus Magni

and the other bishops. An added reason for the appointment of archbishop and other bishops might have been Gustavus Vasa's upcoming engagement to a German princess, Katarina von Lauenburg. Now he had the seats filled and through a coincidence a continuity of consecrations had been retained. The importance of this incident will be discussed in chapter 9. A similar continuity did not take place in Denmark or Norway.

The Royal Governing of the Church

Like many medieval kings in Sweden or on the continent Gustavus Vasa wished to rule over the church in his country. Gustavus Vasa received theological support in his endeavor from the reformers when he wanted to bring about a break with Rome and thereby free himself from "foreign interference."

Through the influence of German advisors, foremost among them Georg Normann, it seems that Gustavus Vasa gained ideological support for his intention to do away with the office of bishop. Several dioceses were divided, and *ordinarii* were appointed to the new regions. (The question whether these were consecrated or not must remain open to research at the present time.) That was the case in Stockholm, Gävle, Jönköping, Örebro, Kalmar, St. Tuna and Viborg. What lies behind is probably the conviction that it was not the consecration that made the bishop legitimate but the royal letters of appointment. To act in such a way means theologically that the special authorization by the Spirit for guidance and consecration is not given through the bishop but by the prince who through the grace of God has become the ruler of the country and through his letter of appointment mediates such gifts. Here we perceive a theocratic worldview in the background in which the king is given full responsibility for the spiritual government of the country and may handle it according to his choosing. Archbishop Laurentius Petri did not share the point of view of the king, as is obvious from the Church Order of 1571 (see appendix). He was for a time together with Paul Justen in Åbo, the only surviving bishop in the reformed church

province. This Bishop Paul was able to consecrate among others, in 1575, Archbishop Laurentius Petri Gothus, the successor of Archbishop Laurentius. The office of bishop had thereby once more been safeguarded in the Church of Sweden.

Powerful Bishops at the Time When Sweden Was a Great Power

During the 17th and 18th centuries Swedish church history can show a long line of able and pious bishops. Many of them are well-known, such as Johannes Rudbeckius in Västerås, Jesper Svedberg in Skara and Archbishop Haqvin Spegel.

In the relationship between the bishops and the royal power there are some remarkable traits. The bishops acted out their function as prophets and critics over against the authorities after the pattern set by the old prophets. Especially the strong reliance on the Old Testament during the seventeenth century contributed to the strength of the office. The office was seen as *iure divino*, prescribed by God.

The bishops also fought successfully against Axel Oxenstierna's plans for a *constitorium regni*, or a central church government with politicians at the head. The estate of clergy gained a strong position through the leadership of the bishops. With the church law of 1686 an order for the election of bishops was introduced which has remained valid until today, except for the possibility that the king could appoint some other deserving person than the one the clergy had proposed.

The Estate of Clergy and the Appointments of Bishops during the 18th Century

Through the constitution of 1720 the parliament gained power to rule the country after a passive period of absolute monarchy. For the estate of clergy this meant new possibilities in taking the lead in clerical matters. Consciousness of the importance for the church of the office of bishop was strengthened by able bishops led by the archbishop. But there still

remained a double standard. Some of the dioceses had superintendents: Karlstad, Härnösand and Visby. They all became bishops' sees eventually, Visby being the last to do so in 1772.

This form of constitution forced the king to keep to the list of candidates that the bishops had made for the election of bishop. The clergy's fight for the appointment of bishop was directed against the royal power. Gustavus III, however, made some appointments of bishops supported by the royal power that he had strengthened through his revolution.

Beside the diocesan bishops there was also a bishop for the serafimerorden from 1783 to 1883. He was appointed by the king without any list of candidates. He supervised the ministers who worked for the charity institutions that the order had established. The office has never been formally annulled. So-called absolute consecration (i.e., that a bishop is consecrated without having a diocese) has thus taken place in the Church of Sweden.

The rising interest in the office of bishop during the eighteenth century coincides with a deepened spirituality under the influence of Pietism and Herrnhutism. The majority of the ministers did probably still embrace a basically orthodox theology. It is interesting to note that in 1790 professor Erik Fant wrote a book about the apostolic succession (*De successione canonica et consecratione episcoporum Sueciae*), in which he claimed that the Church of Sweden has such a succession and that it is important for the church. Fant builds on an earlier work which also claimed the succession in the Church of Sweden, namely the dissertation by Henrik Benzelius Meletema (*Historico-theologicum de successione episcoporum canonica apud evangelicos, praesertim in Suecia*, 1738). In the interest for this question of the eighteenth century we trace curiosity about the Anglican church, even though it was usually known through German literature.

Even neologically-inspired bishops at the turn of the century were anxious to assert the office of bishop as something

essential for the Church of Sweden. There were, however, varied ideas about the theological importance of the office.

From Questioning to Revitalizing the Office of Bishop

Political engagement of the bishop combined with theological unclarity about the meaning of the office confused many people's ideas of it. During the nineteenth century some spoke of abolishing the office. There were protests against the income of the bishops (which in fact varied a lot) and against their political involvement. The newspaper *Aftonbladet* published radical attacks on "ceremonies, catechisms, tithing, and bishops' hats."

Even at the 1809 riksdag there were petitions about this issue and from 1830 they return with regularity. At first the farmers' estate submitted most of these resolutions, but in 1840-41 the estate of the nobles took the lead. Not even in the estate of the clergy can we find a theological treatment of the question. They fall back on formal mistakes in the handling of the cases: the ways and means committees were not entitled to take a position in such questions.

In 1844-45 the estate of the farmers thought it was high time to abolish "the ungodly set-up" of the bishops. They considered that nowadays no one disputed that the high standing of bishops was foreign to the Christian religion. The estate agreed that the office of bishop was "useless, harmful, and perilous to church and society."

At the first Church Assembly in 1868 a motion for the same object and with the same motivations as earlier was raised. This one also was rejected on formal grounds.

Some Reformed ideas were put into practice. Many thought that the newly formed free church in Scotland was the ideal. They imagined that a presbyterial church order by itself would bring about a spiritual rebirth in the Church of Sweden.

From the middle of the century we begin to hear of the so-called Lund High Church movement. Inspired by German confessional Lutheran theology and by the Swedish church's own traditions it introduced a new understanding of the church. "They were high-church because they highly esteemed the church" (Einar Billing). They stressed the episcopal structure of the Church of Sweden. Several men of the movement became bishops. That they were conscious of the church and of the office as religious entities did much to enable the Church of Sweden again to gather strength and unite after the deep division at the end of the nineteenth century.

The parliamentary reform of 1866 was of decisive importance also for the church. The bishops were relieved of their time-consuming parliamentary duties. Thereby they gained a strengthened pastoral position in their dioceses. As a compensation for the loss of the estate of the clergy there was now a Church Assembly where the bishops were members as a matter of course and played a leading role. Thus the foundation was laid for a revitalizing of the office of bishop.

Nathan Söderblom and the Ecumenical Movement

Nathan Söderblom was consecrated archbishop in the cathedral of Uppsala in 1914. Bishop Gottfrid Billing from Lund was the main consecrator, assisted by Bishop von Scheele from Visby and Bishop Rodhe from Göteborg. All the other bishops except two participated in the laying on of hands, along with one representative from the Augustana Synod in the USA and six deans from the home diocese to which at that time the city of Stockholm also belonged. In addition church leaders from England, France, Germany and the Nordic countries had been invited. Nobody could come from England or France, however, because of the war. Church leaders from the other countries were present but did not participate in the laying on of hands. All this aroused sensation and shows how Söderblom wanted to raise consciousness in the Church of Sweden of the fact that the office of bishop is placed in an ecumenical context. He was

very well aware that the consecration took place precisely 750 years after Stefan in Sens was consecrated as the first archbishop in Uppsala. In both cases the consecrator was the bishop of Lund.

In connection with the Söderblom consecration the Archbishop of Canterbury declared that he was not ready to participate in the laying on of hands. But after the war the much discussed negotiations about intercommunion between the Church of England and the Church of Sweden began. Söderblom intervened also in order to introduce the office of bishop to the Tamil Church in India. Through his and the co-workers' intervention the ground was prepared for the introduction of the office of bishop also in other churches that had formed as a result of the mission of the Church of Sweden (Lutheran churches in South Africa, Zimbabwe, Tanzania, and Malaysia). The introduction of the office of bishop in these churches must be understood as a result of a deepening view of the meaning of the office in the Church of Sweden. Likewise the office of bishop was introduced to the Lutheran churches in Estonia, Latvia, and Slovakia. Söderblom's conviction of the ecumenical importance of the Church of Sweden, and thereby the weight of his own office, made it possible for him to prepare for the ecumenical meeting in Stockholm in 1925. Clearly Söderblom saw the office of bishop in part as a sign of unity in the world-wide church and in part as a guarantee of the freedom and integrity of the church.

A New Ecclesiology?

In this section we will briefly touch on three subjects - the high church movement and "the new view of the church," the debate in the Church Assembly concerning the participation of laity in the election of bishops, and the handling of the Lima document in the Church Assembly.

Often on their travels Swedish clergy and laity have been able to report back home their impressions of the English High Church, its worship, its view of ministry and not least its

esteem of the apostolic succession. One rallying-cry for the high church movement in Sweden was the book by G. Rosendal, *Kyrklig förnyelse* (1935), which was followed by *Vårt katolska arv* (1956). To rediscover the Church of Sweden and its rich heritage had already been on the program of Ungkyrkorörelsen. In his books Rosendal is conscious of the special nature of the office of bishop, at the same time as he has some difficulties in formulating the way in which it stands apart from the office of priest. The same tendency can be found in many of those who represent the Swedish high church movement during this century.

"The new view of the church" is represented above all by academic theologians and teachers who during the 1940s and 1950s unearthed a new and extended common understanding of ecclesiology. It made itself known in books like *En bok om kyrkan* (1942), *Den nya kyrkosynen* (1945) and *En bok om kyrkans ömbete* (1951). They all stressed that the church is the body of Christ and not a fellowship like an association. Also the importance of the ministry in the New Testament and in the church was underlined and it gave prominence to statements "that the ministry of the church in a special way is gathered in the office of bishop, as this office has emerged in history."

In 1963 the laity were given the right to participate in the election of bishops. In the debate in the Church Assembly it was said both that a change in the law should directly tie in with older Swedish practice according to the Västgötalagen and also that the status of the office of bishop would be strengthened if the laity shared responsibility for the appointment. The purpose thus was to strengthen the office of bishop and its spiritual authority through this new order. Behind the change of the law lay the fact that the bishops had become ever more active in their dioceses. No longer were they considered merely to be heads of the clergy.

The committee's memorandum pointed out that the order for ordination speaks of a power that is given by the congregation

on behalf of God, namely to ordain ministers. Hence it cannot be that the bishop has his spiritual power from the congregation, but in principle he is entrusted by the congregation. Thereby it follows that the congregation through its proxies shares responsibility for the appointment.

The 1985 Church Assembly dealt with the BEM document. The Council on Doctrine had written quite briefly concerning the office of bishop. It says that there is cause to ask whether the Lutheran tradition in certain cases is unsatisfactory. When the council then underlines that certain statements in the document are unfamiliar to the tradition of the Church of Sweden, this does not necessarily mean a rejection but is only an indication that these statements need closer study.

As for the office of bishop the council is anxious to underline that the Augsburg Confession knows only one ministry. It contains a number of tasks and duties, among them episkopé. Further along it points out that, since BEM states that the New Testament provides no one pattern of ministry, it would be illogical to urge all churches as a means for unity to accept the threefold ministry that evolved historically in the early church. (The council has not, however, noted that BEM says that the development has taken place under the guidance of the Spirit). The council is of the opinion that the threefold ministry can benefit the unity of the churches but is not necessary for unity. What is necessary for unity is that no church makes claims to possess an office that theologically on principle stands above the ministry of the other churches. The council is obviously moving within the framework of the functional view of ministry, but does not totally reject other interpretations.

Some propositions were moved in the Church Assembly as a result of BEM. One of these says, for instance, that the Church of Sweden has a manifold ministry with special consecrations to each one of them. When BEM holds this view of ministry it gives confirmation to the Church of Sweden being part of a broad tradition to continue developing this ministry. The

person who proposed this motion thereby gives evidence of a conviction that the Church of Sweden has not completed its discussions concerning ministry. It is an important question whether the Church of Sweden is to be seen as locked in its present positions or whether, in principle, there is an openness toward deeper insights.

5. THE OFFICE OF BISHOP IN THE ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH AFTER THE REFORMATION

A description of the office of bishop in the Roman Catholic Church cannot follow the same pattern as that for the Church of Sweden. Unlike the Church of Sweden, the Roman Catholic Church is an international and multicultural church and in addition is many times bigger than the Church of Sweden. Therefore we turn primarily to a number of official documents to see how they have described the office of bishop during the last 450 years and how concretely this office has developed in some Western European countries.

Self-examination and Self-reflection

To understand the discussions concerning the office of bishop at the time of the Lutheran Reformation and the following internal reformation, the so-called Catholic "counter-reformation," we must remember that the waning Middle Ages were strongly marked by a theology of ministry that was presbyterially oriented. The office of priest, not the office of bishop, was at the center of interest shown to the special office. Many of the leading theologians had not understood the consecration of bishop as a sacrament but as a sacramentale. This opinion recurred many times at the end of the fifteenth century. The difference between a priest and a bishop then was considered to be almost exclusively a jurisdictional difference. A sign of this view was the right the pope gave to certain (not consecrated bishops) abbots to ordain subdeacons, deacons and priests among their subjects. Likewise it can be proved that priests, with a papal letter and on the pope's commission, ordained priests in certain situations.

The late medieval councils that regarded themselves as representing the universal church consisted not only of bishops but of representatives of the papal see, the large religious orders and the universities, plus the "nations," where lay delegates played a major role. "The reformed view of the priesthood," with the bishop/superintendent as a superpresbyter can

therefore be seen as an effect of the strong presbyterial accent on the office of ministry in the Roman Catholic Church at the end of the Middle Ages.

Add to this picture the fact that many Catholic bishops and abbots - not least in Martin Luther's native country, the German Empire - had become lords who were occupied with politics and a life among the nobility. Some had even become sovereign princes. Already during the fifteenth century the church was striving to reform such occurrences.

Only in a few cases did the new churches that were founded in the sixteenth century because of the reform movements in the northern part of Europe either keep or introduce the office of bishop. When it happened it was clearly indicated that this office was related neither to the Bishop of Rome nor to any worldwide college of bishops. Instead the national church and its head - the king or the prince - enters the scene and often is given a prominent place to influence the church's life. It is primarily with this background that we must understand the handling of the office of bishop in the Roman Catholic Church during the subsequent 450 years.

Already in the preparatory work for the Council of Trent we find, on the one hand, a self-critical attitude as to how the episcopacy had been practiced and, on the other, attempts to clarify the difference between bishops and priests in order to prove against some movements why it is "not enough" for a church merely to have priests, or why priests cannot normally (i.e., without a papal letter) do those things that are the duties of bishops.

The commission *Concilium delectorum Cardinalum* prescribed in 1537, for instance, that to prevent a split in the church the Roman Catholic Church needed law, order and discipline, but, above all, a reawakening of episcopal authority. The disintegration within the church was the result of faults within the hierarchy, all the way from the pope down to the parish priests. The commission asserted among other things that the cardinals should help the pope to guide the church while the

bishops should be shepherds to their flocks. To be a cardinal and at the same time be a bishop in a diocese was impossible. The two have such different duties. Owing to his pastoral duties a bishop must stay in his diocese; the care of the diocese demanded that he lived there. Among the duties was specifically mentioned that the bishops had to supervise those who preached and were counselors. This was especially important in monasteries and convents since the orders often had set a bad example for the secular priests. The commission prescribed also a self-examination and reform for the hierarchy to renew the whole church. The renewal should start already with the recruitment and tutoring of the new candidates for the priesthood.

Also from other documents written in preparation for the Council of Trent it can be concluded that the hierarchy went through a time of self-reflection after the schism. They did not blame the break-up on others, such as on the laity, but wished rather to improve the recruitment of priests and their training, to revitalize the life of the orders, and so on.

The Catholic Reformation

The basic stance of *Concilium delectorum Cardinalum* recurs in several of the decisions made at the Council of Trent, 1545-1563. The council reminded the bishops to care for their flocks in an apostolic spirit and it stressed the duty to reside in their dioceses: the bishop's place is in his diocese. As we have seen earlier this was a rule which bishops throughout history have had difficulties in keeping. For that reason this same admonition returns in innumerable documents. Here, as later on, it is expressed in canonical terms that the bishops should be spiritual guides and be responsible for how the sacrament and preaching were handled. With the spiritual duties it is stressed that the bishop must make visitations in his diocese and meet regularly in synods with the priests. The authors, who had been inspired by the council, describe the ideal bishop in the image of the Good Shepherd. They pointed out that this

ideal had found its embodiment in men like Francois de Sales, Carlo Borromeo and Robert Bellarmine.

The Council of Trent marks clearly a return to a leading position for the episcopate in the Roman Catholic Church. This council, unlike late medieval councils, was completely episcopal in its decision-making. The theologians functioned as advisors, as was also the case later at Vatican I and II. The representatives of certain states intervened, of course, in the negotiations, now as before, but accepted the decisions made by the episcopate under the guidance of the pope. As with later councils, no civil authority was allowed influence or power.

The council never made clear, however, how the episcopate was related to the primate. The result was that the Roman Catholic Church came to have a long drawn-out discussion on whether the bishops had their jurisdiction directly from God or through the pope.

The worsening economic situation of the bishops in Northern and Western Europe during the sixteenth century often helped to strengthen the awareness of the bishops of being shepherds. It was probably more difficult for the bishops to be seen as shepherds when they owned or administered great riches than when these assets were confiscated or secularized, as happened in several cases.

Bishops of the Enlightenment, Episcopalists and Others

The strong stress on the shepherd function in the episcopate at the Council of Trent could not hinder a new wave of "decline." In the middle of the eighteenth century this becomes obvious both in the German-speaking countries and in France, just to mention some countries relatively close to Sweden. Like the Church of Sweden, so also the Roman Catholic Church had Enlightenment bishops and priests whose interests in art, music, literature and politics caused their duties as shepherds and counselors to suffer. Some men, often younger sons of princes and noble families and full of the ideas of the

Enlightenment, were appointed to many dioceses and other higher offices. About the end of the eighteenth century we again find bishops who seldom or never visited their dioceses, or bishops who did not even know the ceremonies they had to perform.

It would be wrong to believe, however, that the episcopal ideal from the Council of Trent managed to penetrate the Roman Catholic Church during the two centuries after the council and that the church then once more declined. On the contrary, already very soon after the council several different tendencies came to the fore. Germany still had bishops who also were princes in the German-Roman Empire. A marked moral, intellectual and spiritual renewal seems to have taken place in seventeenth-century France among the lower clergy while a corresponding renewal among some of the bishops is first visible only at the time of the French Revolution. In seventeenth-century England, and also in other parts, there were many, faithful to the pope, who openly asserted that it would be better to have "apostolic vicars" than bishops guiding the local churches.

Nor did the old tension between the Gallicans and the Ultramontanists end with the Council of Trent. It is not surprising since the council, as we mentioned, did not take up the question of the relation between the episcopate and the primate. The wish of the Gallicans for a relatively strong national freedom of the bishops, though still under the supremacy of the pope, stood against the attempts of the Ultramontanists to centralize the leadership on Rome.

The church was used to living with the tension between these two positions, but during the later part of the eighteenth century a new, more radical episcopal particularism emerged - Febronianism. Justinus Febronius, who published *De statu ecclesiae*, was a pseudonym for the auxiliary bishop of Trier, Nikolaus von Hontheim. According to him, the constitutional form of the church was not the same as that of the monarchy. The church as a totality had the power of the keys, and the

power of the keys had been received by the bishops from the church according to the will of Christ. The primacy had only one function, to serve the unity of the church. But the pope had no jurisdiction over the bishops. He could not make the final decision concerning matters of faith and discipline. Only general councils could do that. They stood in every respect above the pope who, however, was a primate of honour. *De statu ecclesiae* was translated into many languages and was published in many editions. Febronianism was quickly introduced to princely courts and governing chancellories, but above all to the universities and into the scholarly literature. For the Ultramontanists, Febronianism came as another strong reason to plead for a greater papal influence in order to hold back the schismatic tendencies within the church.

The Strengthening of the Pope's Primacy

Vatican I (1870), while fighting radical cultural movements, defined both the universal primacy of the pope and his infallibility when speaking *ex cathedra* (i.e., when the pope speaks officially, with apostolic authority to the whole Roman Catholic world and thereby finalizes a doctrine concerning faith or morality to which the whole church has to adhere). Through its definition of the universal episcopate the council condemned extreme episcopalism.

Because of the outbreak of the war, the council was interrupted early and there was no time to work out a more detailed theology of the episcopate. This task remained. A more precise position on the rights of the bishops in relation to the pope is lacking in the documents both from Tridentinum and Vatican I. Nor is anything mentioned in them about the limits on the pope's *potestas* and *iurisdictio* in relation to the episcopate in praxis.

The unfinished business of these councils led in many cases to the idea that the bishops had been reduced to "apostolic vicars" in and with the council and that the pope was to be seen as the only bishop for the whole Catholic Church. The German

bishops tried to correct the misunderstanding through a "Circulardepesch" in 1875. Pope Pius IX supported them in this effort. Vatican I declared expressly that the bishops are not papal vicars but that, in virtue of their consecration, they should independently govern their dioceses, though under the guidance of the bishop in Rome. When the bishops exercise their episcopal duties in their office, they too, like the apostles, have received their own direct authority to do so. Hence they are not merely serving as delegates of the pope but in fellowship and communion with him.

This does not at all contradict the fact that strong centralizing forces were at work before and during the council, and also afterwards to protect the church from the dangers perceived as threatening. There were even bishops who thought that Vatican I would be the last council; the universal episcopate of the pope and the doctrine of his infallibility were seen as making future councils unnecessary. This did not happen. When the canon law, *Codex Iuris Canonici* was published in 1917, it reiterated to a great extent the thoughts expressed at Trent and Vatican I. It says explicitly that bishops are successors of the apostles through divine institution. Therefore they have their own power and not just a delegated authority to administer their dioceses.

The pope was free to select bishops, unless he was bound to a list of candidates put forward with rights of election, nomination or presentation. Only the pope could bestow offices. Concerning ordination of priests the bishops were *ordinarie ordinatores* in their dioceses. Others could, however, "according to law" or with papal consent obtain the right to ordain, *potestas ordinis*.

We cannot minimize the fact that CIC 1917 in certain parts reflected some centralistic ideas of the kind that lay behind Vatican I. Such ideas were alive and well-known still in the beginning of the 1960s and are printed in the catechisms used in Catholic teaching.

But the picture was nuanced. As a consequence of exegetical, patristic and liturgical research "new" thoughts began to come forth, though mostly among theologians. These theologians were often looked upon with a certain suspicion by the bishops. The encyclical *Mystici corporis* in 1943 became essential for the future view of the office of bishop. In this document Pius XII stressed that the primary duty of bishops was to be shepherds, with responsibility for their dioceses and co-responsibility for the whole church. The unity of the episcopate with the pope was especially emphasized. Together with the pope the episcopate as a totality was infallible in questions of doctrine.

A New Era

A lot has happened since Vatican I and CIC 1917. The situation has drastically changed also in the Roman Catholic Church. The threats from the ideas of the Enlightenment, from the militant and atheistic socialism of the nineteenth century, from modern science and so on had already quieted down somewhat by the beginning of the twentieth century. Other problems found priority, not least social ones, enlarged by the experiences from two world wars and by injustices in both the third world and the first. The position of the church and of its bishops received more and more attention in the mass media and became the target for critical review by people in general. Were the bishops for or against a change in society? How did they act in Nazi Germany or in Latin American states?

The experience of different totalitarian regimes had shown how important it was that the church had a strong, international and politically free and unrestrained leadership. At the same time it became more and more obvious how important it was that the local churches were free in relation to the state, not least in the appointments of bishops.

An increasing voluntary, or involuntary, migration of people resulted in many local churches becoming multicultural and

multilingual. This required new skills from the leadership in those dioceses. To guide a multicultural local church was different from leading a culturally homogeneous one. In those countries where the Roman Catholic Church was in minority and the status of the bishops therefore was weak, the status of the primate could be observed to be growing stronger. It seems that people in these minority situations felt more secure when able to refer beyond themselves as a local church, and then, not least, to a strong leadership in Rome.

Evolution toward a more and more noticeable secularization had in many places lowered the social status of the episcopacy. As noticed earlier, this lowered status made it easier for the bishops to function as shepherds for the people.

Sacramentality and Collegiality

The discussions and decisions which are dealt with in the documents from the Second Vatican Council during the 1960s are all born out of a process going back several centuries. This is particularly true of the office of bishop where the precision and the amplifications that many had asked for after 1870 were realized.

Vatican II investigated thoroughly the origins of episcopacy, its mission and its duties. The work of the council in this respect was the fruit of lengthy historical and systematical studies in depth done by theologians such as Congar, Küng, Rahner and Ratzinger, to name a few of the more famous. In a time when there is no fear of the centrifugal forces from the episcopalism of the nineteenth century, nor any new tendencies to centralize the power to Rome, the council wished to render justice to growing cultural pluralism also in terms of the outer structures of the church. In *Lumen Gentium* the Council takes up "the hierarchical structure of the church." What had already been said in Vatican I (that the bishops are not papal vicars but govern independently their local churches because they are consecrated; they do it under the guidance of the pope in questions of faith and the ceremonial customs of the

universal church), Vatican II clarifies further. The mission of the apostles to lead the church has been carried on through consecration to other men in order that they may continue the apostolic mission to lead the church even after the death of the apostles. In this context the office of bishop has its special place; through divine institution the bishops are the successors of the apostles.

The rightly consecrated bishop has to guide, sanctify and teach his people in his local church. He is invested with full powers from God "in Christ's person" to preach the Word of God and administer the sacraments in his diocese. These are his primary duties. He has also the highest responsibility to see that God's Word is preached pure and simple in his diocese. What distinguishes the bishops from the pope is that they do not individually have "the gift of infallibility." But when they in a definite and decisive way for the whole church make a proposal together with the pope concerning Christian faith and morality, then their statements are irreformable.

The bishop is also described as principal liturgist in his local church. Every Eucharist is led by the bishop himself or by those to whom he has delegated this task through the sacrament of ordination - the priests who from the bishop have received the full power to preach the Word of God. The priests should therefore honor and obey the bishop as their father, while the bishop should look upon the priests as his fellow workers, sons and friends.

Vatican II continues what was already expressed in the decree from Trent, in Vatican I, in the encyclical *Mystici corporis* and in CIC 1917 about the sacrament of ordination. But Vatican II expresses the idea of collegiality more clearly than had been done earlier.

As an expression for collegiality between all the world's Catholic bishops, Paul VI introduced the synod of bishops soon after the council. The representatives from the national episcopal conferences should meet with the pope and his closest advisors in order to discuss questions of interest for the whole church.

To make the idea of collegiality more concrete, different "councils" were introduced - the council of priests, the council of sisters, pastoral councils and so on. Their counterparts in the congregations are the church council and the congregational council.

The juridical and currently binding regulation of the office of bishop can be found in the new canon law promulgated in 1983.

An examination of CIC 1917 shows that the hopes and expectations for what a bishop should be have been phrased, on the whole, in identical words all through church history. He shall be a shepherd and a servant. He shall minister together with the pope and under his guidance. He shall do this in the college of bishops, in his home diocese and in the congregations. Among the newer responsibilities of the bishop can be mentioned that, by extending ecumenicity as the church understands it, he shall show goodness and love toward believers who do not share full communion with the Roman Catholic Church. What distinguishes this document from earlier writings is that only a consecrated bishop, and no other person, is mentioned as ordinator.

In CIC 1983 the idea of collegiality on all levels has taken hold as never before. This idea is *per se* nothing new. It belongs to a basic pattern in the church already in the New Testament. But the determination with which it is now put forth, even in the legal documents, is unique in Roman Catholic church history.

A Catholic diocese in its canonical sense was reinstated in Sweden in 1953. There was no attempt to resurrect the medieval dioceses but a new bishopric was established in Stockholm. This happened 170 years after the time when "the apostolic vicariate, Sweden" had been instituted. Such a vicariate is a prelude to a Catholic diocese. During the quarter of a century that has passed since its establishment, the Roman Catholic Church has grown rapidly in Sweden, primarily due to immigration. In spite of this growth the whole of Sweden

constitutes only one diocese. Since 1987 the bishop has had an auxiliary bishop.

The bishops from the Nordic dioceses together form the Nordic bishops' conference which in turn is represented at the world-wide bishops' synod that meets regularly in Rome.

III

FUNDAMENTAL PRINCIPLES

6. THE OFFICE OF BISHOP IN THE CHURCH

The Roman Catholic Church and the Church of Sweden hold in common that we cannot speak of the church without speaking of ministry and we cannot speak about ministry without speaking of the church. Therefore it is necessary to point out some essential characteristics in the view of the church in order to see in that light some essential traits in the structure of the ministry of the church and thereby also the office of bishop.

The Calling of the Church

The church is the communion in which the crucified and risen Christ is present and continues his work on this earth. The Father sent the Son that through his presence he should be a sign of the kingdom of God and that through his words and acts the kingdom should break forth with justice and mercy. The Son sent the Spirit to strengthen the disciples in their faith and witness. Thus the church is called to be a sign of the heavenly kingdom through its presence and in different circumstances and to preach and confess Christ as the light of the world and its saviour.

The church is as intimately bound to and without reservation dependent upon her Lord as the branches to the vine (John 15:1 *ff.*). The church is the visible and spiritual unity in one body, one Spirit, one hope, one Lord, one faith, one baptism and one Father who is above all and works in and through all. This communion in unity grows through the Word and the sacraments in the body that is the body of Christ (Eph. 4:3 *ff.*).

This body of Christ lives on until the Lord returns in glory. Christians receive their Christian identity by being members of the body (cf. 1 Cor. 12:12). Nobody can be a Christian on their own. The duty and identity of a Christian originates always from a community (1 Cor. 12:12 ff.). When Christ's work continues on earth today, it is the church and thus the baptized and believing individual to whom the mission has come. When an individual fulfills the task to continue the work of Christ into our time it happens always as part of the mission of the church.

Through baptism in the name of the Trinity people are brought into the unity of this body, this community of hope and faith. Those who earlier were not a people are called from darkness to the wonderful light of the Lord to be in him a chosen people, a royal, priestly and prophetic people (1 Pet. 2:9). Through one and the same Spirit the individuals are brought together as living stones in a holy temple in the Lord, God's dwelling on earth (Eph. 2:16 ff., 1 Pet. 2:4 ff.).

In this community that is at once both visible and invisible, which is the church, Christians gain their identity and are placed in a relationship with a future and a hope (Heb. 6:18). Everyone has part in and co-responsibility for the royal, priestly prophetic mission to confess and witness to God's great work. The branches, the members, the stones are many and the tasks are many as the gifts of grace are many in order that the people of God shall be able to fulfill their duties. With their different talents the faithful support one another in their common duty to serve the Lord (Rom. 12:1 ff., 1 Cor. 12:4 ff., 1 Pet. 4:7 ff.). The manifold gifts and tasks are tied to, and are intended to express, the unity of the members in one and the same body, the function of the many living stones in the spiritual building, the belonging of the many to the people of God.

The Church as Sacramental Community and as Institution

Both the Roman Catholic Church and the Church of Sweden hold theologically that the church is present where the faithful are gathered around Word and sacraments. The preaching of the Word and the administering of the sacraments presupposes a ministry. In both churches this view has more and more proved to be fundamental for the church and thereby for the individual member of the people of God. Owing to experiences of an intensified sacramental life in our congregations it has also become natural to understand and describe the church as a sacramental communion in and with Christ. The treasure and mystery of the church is hidden there (Col. 1:27).

The church as the people of God and the body of Christ appears always as institution in the form of many institutions. The church as life and organism, as living communion with Christ and all the faithful in all ages, needs an organization. In both organism and organization there is a tension between the divine and the human. The organism and the organization cannot be compared as two distinct entities. It is only one church, in the unity of these organic and organizational parts salvation is transmitted. The institutional part is co-acting in this transmission but never acts exclusively because the church as institution is divine, both through its origin in Christ by its mission to transmit salvation, and its growth under the guidance of the Holy Spirit. The tension cannot be relaxed, neither through attempts to separate form and content nor through attempts to identify them with each other. In this tension lies Christ's institution of ministry and services for the people of God.

It is important to approach questions concerning forms of organization in the church as institution from this fundamental perspective on the church. The church has always been and must always remain institutional since its call and its sending happened on earth.

Within the Church of Sweden there has been a tendency to separate divine and human too sharply, with the divine bound up with an invisible church placed in the world of ideas while the institution is seen as belonging only to the human. Within the Roman Catholic Church there have been tendencies to see the institution in all its parts as if it were divine. The working group considers that it is over-simplifying either to separate form and content or to identify form and content.

Just as the church is sacramental fellowship taking form in earthly and human elements, so it also includes organizational forms such as planning boards and directing offices of various kinds, legal administration and so on. Brought into the sacramental context structures and forms can and are meant to be signs of - and witness to - the presence of Christ in the world. Much is changing and must be formed in such a way that the witness to the presence of Christ in the world can clearly be grasped and understood in every age and milieu. If that is not the case the call of the church is muffled and individuals are hindered from growing in the communion and from shouldering responsibility for the common mission.

The Mission of the Church in the World

By its sending, the church is distinct as a people with a mission for the world, in the world. This people has its foundation in a covenant with God (Ex. 19:6) that has been shared through Christ with the worldwide church (Acts 3:25). The old covenant is fulfilled through a new covenant (Rom. 11). Through Christ salvation is offered to the whole world by the new people of God who are the church.

The mission of the church in the world is to be a palpable sign of God's universal call to salvation and reconciliation, to unity and to peace. For this mission a multiplicity of forms is needed and it requires imagination by the people and a power to administer faithfully God's manifold grace. It belongs to the mission to reach people in words and action and to introduce strangers and guests to the church so that when part of the

community they will find their identity as human beings and a role in the mission of the church (Eph. 2:14 ff., 1 Cor. 12:2 ff.).

The duty to be and work in the world is required of the people of God and therefore also of the individuals who belong to this people. The task of the people is to praise and give thanks to God, and to celebrate his presence in the Word and sacraments, to preach his salvation to the world, to receive people into the community and to share the human responsibility for life, for the earth and for work. A sacramental view is the classic expression for this irreducible tension.

Growing into an ever deeper unity with Christ is fundamental for the existence of the people of God, and for its calling and sending it must gather together locally to be built up by the Word. In the liturgy the church is manifested as a sacramental fellowship, wholly dependent on the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. At the same time, it is claimed for all kind of tasks, and to take responsibility for God's creation. The people of God are called to unite in the apostolic faith and faithfully execute the apostolic mission in the world. The celebration of the Eucharist brings this out clearly.

The Ministry of the Church and Ministry in the Church

In the church, as the people of God, the body of Christ and the temple of the Spirit, there are many ministries, among them a special service of ordination to office in the church. Though shaped in varied ways, this office has always existed in the church. The apostles' uniform and fundamental function implicitly included a responsibility to build up and lead the first congregations. This had to be continued. The New Testament depicts how a special ministry was formed among other varied ministries. This was understood to follow in the ministry of those apostles who had been sent by Christ. Such a special ministry proved itself necessary for the sake of leadership in the congregations.

In the spirit of the New Testament it can be said:

The special ministry that was founded by Jesus Christ in his calling and sending the apostles was essential then, and is essential always, and under all circumstances (GA 17, *cit.* Accra 13).

There have been tendencies within the Roman Catholic Church to stress the ministry of the church so strongly that the church almost became identified with the hierarchy. The doctrine of the church, ecclesiology, could be seen as "hierarchology" (Yves Congar). We are also aware that the ministry within the Church of Sweden has also been so stressed that it has given cause to speak of "a priest church." Tendencies of this sort have been harmful. They have also brought out the opposite destructive trait; people have stressed co-responsibility of the laity and called for influence by the elected representatives over against the church's ministers.

When we, in accord with statements in various international dialogues, now state that the ministry of the church has been and is of fundamental importance in and for the church, we do so because we have understood the church as a sacramental community in need of a ministry so that the people of God may be equipped for its calling and its sending.

In order to fulfill its mission, the church needs persons who are publicly and continually responsible for pointing to its fundamental dependence on Jesus Christ, and thereby provide, within a multiplicity of gifts, a focus of its unity. The ministry of such persons, who since very early times have been ordained, is constitutive for the life and witness of the Church. (BEM Ministry 8).

In this sense the ministry of the church is of constitutive importance for the church. As a service in and for the building up of the people of God the ministry is a given and important part of the church as institution.

The ministry is God's gift to the church so that it is kept alive and is built up and prepared for its mission in the world. In the New Testament this is described in different ways: as the

service of the Word of God and thereby also the service of Christ (2 Cor. 2:17), he who is the Word (John 1); as the service of the Spirit (2 Cor. 3:8); as the service of reconciliation (2 Cor. 5:18). This obviously does not mean that the gifts of the Spirit should be linked exclusively to the ministry (1 Cor. 12:4-31), or that the preaching or the witness should be done exclusively by the ministry. But the structure of the ministry expresses in a special way the structure of the church. Just as the church in its totality is ministry borne by God's sovereign will, so only that person who by Christ's own intervention (ordination) has received this ministry can be its bearer. Through ordination the bearer receives special gifts from the Spirit and can serve through the power given by the Holy Spirit. The ministry, like the church, thus has a basic trinitarian structure that also is present in the Eucharist and in the whole Christian life.

The Ministry as God's Gift in and for the Church

The church's office and ministry exists so that the sources of revelation shall overflow and give life to the people of God. In this it is God's gift to the church. Those who are ordained to ministry have to be God's ambassadors who, in the midst of the congregation, can speak and act on Christ's behalf for the people's edification. Through baptism and faith the ordained ministers are linked and joined with other members of the people of God and belong to the communion of God's people. Through ordination they are also claimed by the Father for his work among his people.

When the church ordains people to the ministry it empowers them to represent it before the Father.

A ministry characterized in this manner is reflected in various texts of the New Testament and has, under changing forms, been carried on through the whole history of the church.

In the abiding relationship to the normative apostolic tradition, this ministry actualizes the sending of Jesus

Christ (by the Father). The presence of the ministry in the congregation expresses the fact that God's initiative and authority has precedence in the life of the church.

Fundamental for a right understanding of the church's mission in the world as a sacramental community, and for a right understanding of her ministry, is "that the ministry exists both within the congregation and facing the congregation." When the ministry, as God's gift to the church, is practiced on behalf of Jesus Christ and thus actualizes his presence, it stands with authority facing the congregation. "He who listens to you listens to me" (Luke 10:16). The authority of the ministry therefore ought not to be understood as delegated from the congregation (GA 23).

The Ministry of the Church as the Ministry of Jesus Christ

It is God who in Christ calls people to ministry most often by letting the church test their inner call and gifts of grace and then ordain them to its ministries. The call, mediated in many and various ways, is an expression of the fact that the church can and must appoint people to render these services.

This does not exclude the fact that the church's office of ministry is instituted as a special service to which Jesus Christ calls and sends his servants. The ministry is practiced in and for the communion of the church that is one with the risen Christ who himself calls, leads and sends through his Spirit. The call of the church is completed through a liturgy of ordination, an expression of the fact that the church does not own its ministry. Through the act of ordination it is made clear that those who have been ordained to service in the church do not themselves own the ministry but have been appointed to act on Christ's commission and in his name.

The ministry stands, as indicated earlier, in a double relationship to the church, both as an integrated part of it, and apart from it. This double aspect can also be expressed thus: the

ministry is both something that comes from the church which is its precondition, and something that is instituted by Christ. It can also be expressed in categories of representation that delineate what or whom the ministry represents.

When we see the ministry as instituted by Christ and something which exists with his authority, then the ministry represents Christ before the church and the world. That holds for preaching and administration of the sacraments but also for the fact that the ministry exists. Preaching and administration of the sacraments, as stated above, cannot be divorced from the person who acts out these things. We can go as far as saying that in some sense there is an identity between the Christ who sends and the person who is being sent (Luke 10:16).

The ministry of the church, like the church itself, provides two perspectives which only together, and never when cultivated separately, can do justice to the special character of the ministry. One could be called the dynamic, or functional perspective, the other the ontological perspective. Our intention is to hold together these two aspects. The functional aspect claims that the ministry is constitutive for the church in so far as the service is necessary for preaching and administration of the sacraments to take place. We consider that the value of the functional aspect lies in the relation of the office to the congregation being strongly emphasized and that the office is not to be viewed in isolation from its function as a service to the congregation and the church. At the same time the ministry must not be seen only as functional. We affirm also the basis for the ontological perspective in the respect that, just as the church not only is a function but also an expression of the continued sacramental presence of Christ in the world, so also is the ministry in essence a sign that works. Not only through the function but also through the person who has the authority to exercise the function is the revelation transmitted. As a consequence of the incarnation, the separation between spiritual and material is fused together and matter becomes the bearer of spiritual

characteristics through divine intervention. This is the case in the doctrine of the sacraments and also the case in ministry.

We are aware that, especially within the Roman Catholic Church, there has been a tendency to stress the connection between Christ and ministry so strongly that the ministry sometimes threatens to overshadow Christ. The risk is that the bearer of the office is seen as a replacement for Christ.

We are also aware of the tendency within the Church of Sweden to loosen the relationship between Christ and the bearer of ministry to the point that ministry is seen as a profession which the particular minister or congregation is free to shape and form.

We are conscious of the tendencies within the Roman Catholic Church to overstate the ontological aspect of ministry by having ordinations without relation to a mission. The functional aspects have almost disappeared. (Such tendencies - i.e., practicing absolute ordinations of persons who then are not practicing their ministry in the life of the church - can also be found in the Church of Sweden).

We are also conscious of a tendency, particularly in the Church of Sweden and in evangelical churches on the whole, to stress the functional aspect and the church's call to service so strongly that ministry could almost be considered an institution for delegating certain tasks to members of the congregation. But the people of God has no right to free itself from its calling and sending by merely delegating various tasks.

In the Church of Sweden tradition one has often shied away from ontological terminology. This should not be seen as a reluctance to take what we have called a sacramental view, but as a safeguard for the Word as the efficacious power of God. The decisive point has been that neither the church nor the ministry can arbitrarily have the divine at its disposal. Thus, we find it possible to speak of a collaboration between function and ontology without it leading to an arbitrary ministry.

The Ministry of the Church as Ministry of the Spirit

All the people of God are called in faith and obedience to be a spiritual temple and to bring forth spiritual sacrifices in and through Christ (2 Pet. 2:4 ff.). All have a duty to use their talents to serve and help the neighbor with the strength that God gives (2 Pet. 4:10 ff.). The gifts of grace, charismata, are personal, not as possession but as equipment for edification and in service of the one and the same Spirit (1 Cor. 12:4 ff.).

The Holy Spirit bestows in the community diverse and complementary gifts....All members are called to discover with the support of the community the gifts they have received and use them for the building up of the Church, and for the service of the world to which the church is sent (BEM Ministry 5).

When the ministry of the church is also called the spiritual ministry or the ministry of the Spirit, that is not at the expense of the multitude of charismata of the Spirit, still less to claim that the gifts of the Spirit are exclusively linked to the ministry. On the contrary, it is rightly pointed out that the ministry is practiced in and through the Spirit that he may awaken and strengthen faith, gather the people of God and enliven the gifts of grace in the congregations (2 Cor. 3:4 ff.). The gathering and unifying work of the Spirit is principally made visible when the congregation is gathered for worship. In the church as sacramental community the ministry has its foremost function. In the congregation gathered "in public," the work of the Spirit is made visible in the responsibility of the ministers to take charge and lead the congregation to full and active participation in the liturgy.

The fundamental character of ministry is expressed in a liturgy of ordination. There the church acknowledges the gifts of the person called but also asks the Father, through prayer and the laying on of hands, for the gifts of the Spirit and for his power to those who are being ordained to serve in the name of Christ. "As Christ chose and sent the apostles, Christ

continues through the Holy Spirit to choose and call persons to the ordained ministry" (BEM Ministry 11).

Not only in the liturgy of ordination, but again and again both the ordained and the people of the church need to remind themselves that the ministry of the church is, and must show that it is, a sign of the fundamental structure of the church as it exists in unity through the Spirit with the Son to the glory of the Father. The practice of the ministerial task ought therefore to take place in such a way that the participation and the co-responsibility of the whole people of God is not blurred but clarified. This is especially important at a worship service, particularly when the sacrament of unity is celebrated.

The christological authority (*exousia*) of the ministry must be practiced in the Holy Spirit. The Minister must actualize the cross of Christ not only through his word and through the administration of the sacrament but also in his whole life and service (2 Cor. 4:8-18, 11:22-33) (GA 22).

The Ministry of the Church in its Various Forms

In the Roman Catholic Church and the Church of Sweden in modern times the duties of the bishop, the priest and the deacon have become more clearly differentiated and more theologically motivated. (We do not deal with women's access to the ministry. The three words, bishop, priest and deacon, refer in the following to only male ministers for the Roman Catholic Church and both male and female ministers for the Church of Sweden.) In both churches there is ongoing investigation, and new experiments and experimentation, concerning the diocese, the priesthood, and a clearer theological motivation as to the responsibility of the bishop's supervision, guidance and teaching.

The threefold structure of ministry (we use the word threefold rather than triple to point out that the church basically has only one ministry although it has three sections - in the

Roman Catholic Church one speaks of the sacrament of ordination which indicates that there is only one ministry, while in the Lutheran tradition the single ministry of Word and sacrament has been a principle) refers back to the view of the church's essence, structure and function. About the office of bishop it is stated that the church, in order not to dissolve and become the sum of its congregations, must have a coordinating office of ministry that appears as a living and personal sign of the unity of the church, and this unity is constitutive for the church. Our traditions recognize the office of bishop as a form by which this unity is expressed. Through his office the bishop shows the faithful the mission of the church in the world: witness (*martyria*), service (*diakonia*), and making Christ's sacrificial atonement present in the church and for the world (*leiturgia*). The bishop effects this locally by sending priests and deacons to work together with him, with each other and with the whole people of God. The responsibility of the bishop in the Church of Sweden is expressed in the order for consecration of 1987 thus:

A bishop shall have oversight over the diocese and its congregations. He is responsible for God's Word being preached in purity and clarity, for the sacraments being rightly administered, and for the works of charity being practiced according to God's will. A bishop shall ordain and inspect, visit, take and give counsel, listen, make decisions, and in all his work strengthen God's people in the task of discerning the signs of the time and of bearing witness to God's mighty acts for the whole creation.

A bishop shall in his ministry live as a servant of Christ and be a shepherd for God's flock. With vigilance and wisdom the bishop shall serve unity in Christ for the church's edification and renewal in the Spirit so that the love of God becomes visible in the world.

The calling of a bishop will now be entrusted to you. Meet people tenderly and with respect. Together with them

seek the way of God's will and let it be your endeavor to let faith, doctrine and life become one.

That the ministry is threefold is not a goal in itself but part of the equipment given the church for the sake of its life and mission. In our discussions we have found the BEM description of the threefold ministry important for our continued striving toward unity between our churches (BEM 29-31):

Bishops preach the Word, preside at the sacraments, and administer discipline in such a way as to be representative pastoral ministers of oversight, continuity and unity in the Church. They have pastoral oversight of the area to which they are called. They serve the apostolicity and unity of the Church's teaching, worship and sacramental life. They have responsibility for leadership in the Church's mission. They relate the Christian community in their area to the wider Church, and the universal Church to their community. They, in communion with the presbyters and deacons and the whole community, are responsible for the orderly transfer of ministerial authority in the Church.

Presbyters serve as pastoral ministers of the Word and sacraments in a local Eucharistic community. They are preachers and teachers of the faith, exercise pastoral care, and bear responsibility for the discipline of the congregation to the end that the world may believe and that the entire membership of the Church may be renewed, strengthened, and equipped in ministry. Presbyters have particular responsibility for the preparation of members for Christian life and ministry.

Deacons represent to the Church its calling as servants in the world. By battling in Christ's name with the myriad needs of societies and persons, deacons exemplify the interdependence of worship and service in the Church's life. They exercise responsibility in the worship of the congregation: for example by reading the Scriptures, preaching and leading the people in prayer. They help in the

teaching of the congregation. They exercise a ministry of love within the community. They fulfill certain administrative tasks and may be elected to responsibilities for governance.

Here we limit ourselves to questions concerning the office of bishop in the Roman Catholic Church and the Church of Sweden.

Episkopé and the Office of Bishop

In most traditions in the international ecumenical dialogue the rediscovered term episkopé has been accepted to indicate the function of regional oversight, guidance and teaching, face to face with the congregations and the ministers of the congregations and their other co-workers.

The Church as the body of Christ and the eschatological people of God is constituted by the Holy Spirit through a diversity of gifts of ministries. Among these gifts a ministry of episkopé is necessary to express and safeguard the unity of the body. Every church needs this ministry of unity in some form in order to be the Church of God, the one body of Christ, a sign of the unity of all in the kingdom (BEM Ministry 233).

In the Lutheran-Catholic dialogue we have emphasized both the necessity of such a function and the fact that it can be found in the history of various Lutheran churches (GA 42-48). In the international Lutheran-Catholic dialogue however, Roman Catholics have worked with traditions other than that represented by the Church of Sweden. The episkopé function in the sense used in the international Lutheran-Catholic dialogue is found only in the office of bishop in the Church of Sweden - and of course in the Roman Catholic Church.

We who represent the Church of Sweden and the Roman Catholic Church think that the content of episkopé must be linked to certain persons since the church theologically does not know of any impersonal structures or any kind of power

apparatus. To practice episkopé a person must be authorized by Christ. This happens by consecration as *episkopos* - that is in our churches as bishop. That episkopé is practiced by individuals who through ordination receive their mission from Christ means always in our traditions that episkopé is identical with the office of bishop.

The Church of Sweden belongs among the Lutheran churches that kept the office of bishop at the time of the Reformation. This is more strongly expressed by KO 1571 than in other Lutheran documents. KO 1571 calls it an apostolic gift to Christendom, "without doubt from God and the Holy Spirit." This high esteem of the office has not always been universally accepted, but has regained its strength during the twentieth century. The Church of Sweden has also actively participated in the process of introducing the office of bishop in several Lutheran churches so that the necessary episkopé function in the ministry of the church will best be served.

The Roman Catholic Church looks upon the office of bishop as a necessary prerequisite for intercommunion with other traditions. It does this for two reasons. Since the Eucharist is the visible manifestation of the unity of Christ with all members in the body of Christ, then intercommunion cannot be looked upon as a means toward and a preliminary sign of that unity. Because the office of bishop is the sign of unity between the church in different places and various regions of the world, intercommunion presupposes a church community that is represented by and takes its expression in the visible communion between bishops (including the Bishop of Rome - i.e., the pope).

For the Church of Sweden, uniformity in the structure of ministry (in agreement with CA 7 and current practice) cannot be a precondition for intercommunion. Thus it is natural for the Church of Sweden to look upon ecumenical intercommunion as an anticipatory sign to unity in Christ.

The Office of Bishop and the Duty to be a Shepherd

Like all other people the people of God need guidance and help in keeping together. Guidance belongs ultimately to Christ who is the good shepherd (John 10:11). In the sacramental community which is the people of God, Christ's guidance through the Spirit finds its expression primarily in the ministry of the church, particularly in the office of bishop. The central perspective in the New Testament is the shepherd motive: the charge for certain people, in and through the Spirit, to become shepherds for God's congregation, won through the blood of the Son, and to work with devoted care, oversight and guardianship under personal responsibility before "the chief shepherd" (John 21:16 *ff.*, Luke 15:4 *ff.*, Acts 20:28 *ff.*, 1 Pet. 5:1-4).

The duty to be a shepherd cannot therefore be replaced with impersonal structures from which personal authority, personal responsibility and, on principle, possible martyrdom are absent.

The task of guidance is not exclusively bound to the church's ministry (chapter 8) and the task of being a shepherd is not exclusively reserved for the bishop. The office which in ecumenical dialogue is identified as necessary for episkopé, however, is portrayed in a special way for the people of God and for the unity of the church, in the mission given at the ordination to this office. Recent developments in the Roman Catholic Church and the Church of Sweden have emphasized the responsibilities of the diocesan bishop to be a pastor and to unify the church. Together with other bishops and the priests and deacons and other co-workers in the diocese, the bishop, through his office, lifts up the calling and sending of the whole church in worship, service and witness. In the diocese and its congregations the bishop with his personal duties of supervision, guidance and teaching is in person a sign of a wider fellowship in the church that belongs to the whole people of God. Likewise in wider circles the bishop is a personal link to the diocesan church and a reminder of the church's sacramental unity manifested in the worship life of the local church.

7. THE CONSECRATION OF A BISHOP

The Calling to Ministry

In the Roman Catholic Church and the Church of Sweden the act of ordination is the last step in a process of being called into the church's ministry. This act has earlier been named an act of the church faithful to Christ under the guidance of the Spirit. In various ways, the selection and the testing of candidates is done in connection with the presentation of the candidates for ordination to serve in and for the church.

In the Reformation churches the process of calling has been strongly stressed as an expression of the view that ordination could only take place as an answer to a direct need of a minister for a specific placement in the local or diocesan church. This was in contrast to ordination without direct placement, so-called absolute ordination. The chief word for the duty of the ordained became therefore *ministerium* (service), the service of the Spirit or of the Word for people living in a specified community. The whole process, including ordination, could therefore be termed "vocation" (the calling). Thus CA art. 14 states that nobody in the congregation has the right to exercise the special ministry without being *rite vocatus* (duly called). In the Church of Sweden, the principle of ordination for ministry according to need has been stressed in KO 1571 and KL 1686, and as far as we know the principle has on the whole been standard practice. From Vatican II we learn that the main word for the church's ministry has become *ministerium*, service in and for the church. "Absolute ordinations" have lost ground in the same degree that the church's office clearly has been placed in an ecclesiological context.

Concerning the process of calling, the Roman Catholic Church and the Church of Sweden differ. Each tradition within itself has also different ways to proceed when testing the people to be ordained to any of the three different forms of ministry. If we stay with the ordination of bishops, we find that the process has undergone extensive changes in both traditions.

We are aware of the fact that the procedure of calling from a theological point of view has certain unsatisfactory traits both in the Roman Catholic Church and the Church of Sweden. The problems are historical and they need further attention. The selection of a candidate through an election, as well as testing his suitability or *confirmatio* ought to take forms that in themselves bear witness to the fact that those who take part in the process do it for the church and as instruments of the Holy Spirit.

The development in the Roman Catholic Church from the early church to the Reformation mainly took its course from the cooperation of the congregations in elections by diocesan councils during the High Middle Ages, and on to the freedom of the pope to appoint the bishops, even if the bishops' conferences have certain rights to present candidates. This development was partly dictated by a desire to avoid politicized elections. At the same time it can be seen as an expression of papal centralization. Vatican II renewed the belief in the church as the people of God and therefore judged this practice theologically unsatisfactory or even indefensible. Various suggestions as to forms of participation by the people of God in the selection of a candidate, as an expression of their co-responsibility for the diocesan church, have not yet been worked out.

At the Reformation the Church of Sweden inherited the custom of elections by the diocesan councils, practiced in different ways, but the king was always free to appoint any of those who had been selected or to appoint someone else. Many changes have taken place along the way up to the new order of 1963, which is the one now current. It maintains that the diocesan bishop shall be elected by clergy and laity represented in equal numbers, and by the diocesan council. At the election of an archbishop all the other diocesan councils must also vote. The government is bound to appoint one of the three candidates who received the highest number of votes in the election. The order of 1963 introduced a *corpus* of lay electors. The idea was that such an order of election would better express that

the bishop is the whole diocese's bishop. Therefore not only ministers but also proxies for the laity should participate in casting their ballots.

Ordination to Ministry

According to both the Roman Catholic Church and the Church of Sweden, the calling to church office is completed through ordination. During the Middle Ages the word *ordinatio* (appointment) had become synonymous with the liturgical act of consecration and in that sense it was taken over by the churches of the Reformation. The word already bears witness to the act of ordination as fulfilling the process of calling, equipping those who are ordained with the authority to serve on the call of Christ through the power of the Holy Spirit.

That the ordination to ministry is the necessary prerequisite for service, according to the Roman Catholic Church, may be briefly mentioned through a reference to the fact that the act of ordination is a sacrament. The necessity of ordination in the Church of Sweden has been particularly spelled out, for instance, in KO 1571 and to some degree also in KL 1686.

The Basic Structure of the Ordination Liturgy

The liturgical structure and form for ordination is undergoing change in a lot of churches as a consequence of the new thoughts about the essence of the church and the role of the church's ministry. Briefly summarized, the change means that an act which seemed earlier to have the character of a bestowal, and partly seemed only to concern the clergy, now has structure making it clear that ordination is also a concern of the whole people of God, having at its center a prayerful act with the laying on of hands.

The new liturgies for ordination, of the Roman Catholic Church from 1968 and the Church of Sweden from 1988, are better suited as to structure and form than earlier ones to indicate the participation of the whole congregation in the act of

consecration. In these liturgies the laying on of hands is coordinated with the ordination prayer that includes the epiclesis as the prayer for the Spirit's descending on the person who is being ordained.

In the Roman Catholic Church the liturgy of 1968 follows an order authorized through the constitution *Sacramentum ordinis* 1947, according to which the indispensable *materia* and *forma* of the sacrament of ordination are the laying on of hands and the prayer, especially the epiclesis. In the Church of Sweden, the commission's proposal on which the liturgical reform was built contained an extensive motivation for the basic structure of ordination through epicletic prayer and laying on of hands. The motivation for the theology and liturgy of ordination connected both with contemporary ecumenical movements and with KO 1571. There it says that ordination through laying on of hands and prayer is a custom from the time of the apostles that has been used in the whole of Christendom. The main argument for this apostolic and ecumenical order of prayer and laying on of hands states that "the holy Spirit without which this ministry cannot be well practiced is given through such means" (KO 1571 p. 141 ff.).

We share the understanding that the liturgy of ordination in its structure and form should be as clear as possible and its different elements should be of concern for all God's people who, at the moment of ordination, are represented by the congregation present. It is important for all the participants, including those who are being ordained, that the manner in which the liturgy is celebrated gives expression to the conviction that the church does not have church office at its own disposal but the ministry is a gift to the people from the Father for the sake of the Son through the Spirit.

From this basic view it is important that the laying on of hands be portrayed as a sign of God's action in and with his church through its ordained ministers.

That only those who are ordained participate in the laying on of hands is a custom from the early church, just as there are

different rules for consecration of bishops, priests and deacons. This order is clearly recommended in the Roman Catholic Church's rituals for ordinations of bishops, priests and deacons. It has also been recommended in the Church of Sweden's older rituals and was preserved and theologically motivated in the proposal of the commission which was the basis for the new order of ordination of 1988. Here, however, the directions were phrased in such a way that they do not unequivocally say which ordainers shall appoint the assistants at the laying on of hands. It is therefore so much more urgent that the ordainers keep the order implying that God, by his servants, intervenes with his mighty hand as an answer to the prayer of the church.

Also the ordination prayer with epiclesis ought to be formulated in such a way that the prayer gives clear liturgical expression to the church's faith that God hears the prayer of his church and sends new ministers. In this perspective it is not only natural but urgent that the liturgy of ordination leads into the Eucharistic liturgy, the celebration of communion.

The Liturgy of the Consecration of Bishop

The liturgical basic pattern for diaconal and priestly ordinations appears also in the liturgy for the consecration of bishop. The common pattern is more obvious in the new orders for the Roman Catholic Church and for the Church of Sweden than in their earlier liturgies. In both old and new, however, there are some special characteristics for the consecration of bishop. These can be summarily categorized as elements bringing out what is special for the office of bishop. In the liturgies of the Roman Catholic Church and the Church of Sweden the bishop's mission is specifically phrased in the introductory words leading to the questions, in the promises, and in the prayer for the one to be consecrated. The "shepherd" and the "unity" motifs stand out in the description of all the tasks of service in the diocesan church, and fellowship with the faithful and with the clergy in the congregations. Especially the

Roman Catholic texts stress that the bishop through his consecration is included in the college of bishops and in its responsibility for the whole community of the church which the bishop now represents in the diocesan church.

We have noticed that the reworking of the proposal of a new liturgy for the Church of Sweden has resulted in the perspective on the bishop's mission actually being limited mainly to the church in the diocese. The reworking even touched wordings concerning collegiality between the bishops and also the bonds between the ordinator and those priests and deacons whom the bishop ordains to the diocese. That a special bond is retained between the ordinator and those priests and deacons is hardly strange, nor that the bishop through consecration becomes part of the college of bishops. This change in wording is rather an expression of the fact that these conditions and relations have not yet been subjected to thorough theological treatment.

The idea that the consecration of a bishop is the concern of the whole community is expressed liturgically also by the church being represented by bishops from other sees who have travelled to be present. This is in accordance with a rule that was promulgated first at the ecumenical council of Nicaea in 325. These bishops are present to hear the promises that the bishop-to-be gives and to certify his adherence to the apostolic faith. That is why they as representatives of the college of bishops also assist during the consecration with laying on of hands and prayer. In both the Roman Catholic Church and the Church of Sweden nowadays, representatives of other confessional communities are invited as guests, thus to make visible the desire to overcome schisms and reach out toward the full unity of the church.

Since 1920 the Church of Sweden has had the custom that most of the diocesan bishops participate as assistants at a consecration. In addition bishops from other churches in full communion with the Church of Sweden participate too. Also other churches or religious bodies have been invited to send bishops

and representatives as guests. The Roman Catholic Church has similar customs. The guests do not participate in the central act of consecration; only the assisting bishops do so. This is an expression of the importance of the college of bishops in the church and of the bishops' calling to be a sign of the unity of the church.

In the Roman Catholic Church, during the laying on of hands, there is first a silent prayer that leads into the consecration prayer recited aloud. The prayer is from the early church, taken from *The Apostolic Tradition of Hippolytus* (ca. 215). The texts, which allude to the Bible, draw the contours of the church in which God for the sake of his people calls and installs his servants, and the contours of the bishop's mission to serve as shepherd. The part of the epiclesis prayer reads: "Pour out upon this chosen one that power which is from you, the governing Spirit..."

In the Church of Sweden the laying on of hands takes place during the reciting of the epiclesis. The new prayer, formulated with allusions to the Bible, also draws the contours of a church in which God chooses his servants for the gospel, and the contours of the bishop's mission in service of the gospel. The epiclesis prayer reads: "O Lord, come to your servant with your Holy Spirit and receive him into your service as a bishop in your church."

In both traditions these new liturgies emphasize that the aim and focus is the office of bishop in the church of God and that the consecration therefore is performed "in apostolic manner, through prayer and laying on of hands in the name of God" (Church of Sweden liturgy), for the mission of being a shepherd and for the ministry of unity.

Ordination and Installation

Both the Roman Catholic Church and the Church of Sweden have historically different kinds of installations of those who begin a given ministry in the diocesan or the local church. To

our medieval heritage belong legal acts of transfer. In both the Roman Catholic Church and the Church of Sweden the ordination is a non-repeatable act and in both churches the place for ministry is regulated by appointment. The person who for one reason or another has been prevented from serving for a time is reinstated without a new ordination. (We do not here take up the complicated question of reordination).

Concerning bishops, the Roman Catholic Church has so-called enthronement, or seating of the bishop as the concluding part of the liturgy when the consecration takes place in the diocesan church of the newly consecrated bishop. There is also a tradition from the Middle Ages that is used in other cases to mark liturgically that the bishop is entering his ministry in the church of the diocese.

The Church of Sweden had a corresponding ritual in past times which later was reshaped so that the bishop upon his arrival takes his seat as the head of the diocesan council. Eventually the custom arose at this occasion that the bishop presented his "shepherd's letter" to the diocese. Occasionally, since the 1930s, voices have been raised asking that the consecration take place in the diocesan cathedral, or that the newly consecrated bishop should be received by the diocesan church with a special liturgy at his arrival in the diocese. The liturgical order of 1988 contains also such a rite for the reception of a bishop by representatives of all the congregations of the diocese within the framework of a mass.

Within both the Roman Catholic Church and the Church of Sweden, the difference between the bishop's authority to ordain and his jurisdictional authority has led to a practice according to which an appointed bishop begins his ministry and practices it for a shorter or longer period even before his consecration. From a theological perspective, however, it is important that practice does not hide but reveals the fundamental meaning for service of the consecration. The consecration institutes a bishop into the whole mission, not just into particular tasks, within the one unified office as shepherd.

In our opinion it is urgent to arrive at a practice in which the bishop elect first receives consecration and then arrives as consecrated bishop in his diocese and is there received when he takes up his duty. Thus it will be clear that the bishop, who is elected, appointed and has received his letter of appointment, can practice his duty, not because of the election or the appointment or the letter of appointment or of his own power. All those things are prerequisites for the consecration through which the servants are set apart for their mission by the power of the Holy Spirit.

8. THE SACRAMENTAL CHARACTER OF THE OFFICE OF BISHOP

It is well known that ordination in the Roman Catholic Church is a sacrament while in the Church of Sweden and according to Lutheran doctrine it is not. In this case as in others, however, ecumenical dialogue has shown that it is not enough to stop at the bare statement. Differences can depend on diverging interpretations and also on variant wordings that might have been decided in a situation of theological controversy. And the reverse may be the case; an agreement in wording might, in reality, be just a coincidence.

Concerning the sacramentality of the episcopacy we must return to what we said earlier concerning the church's ministry and ordination. We must test the meaning of the fact that the person who is called to the church's ministry is admitted to it through ordination. Naturally we also have to touch on the meaning of the notion of sacrament.

The Unity of the Ministry and the Three Forms of Service

We will first repeat what already has been said about the threefold form of the church's ministry. The Roman Catholic Church finds this to be of principal significance while the Church of Sweden, with the other Lutheran churches, gives primary importance to the oneness of ministry. The ministry is one since it is the ministry of Word and Spirit in and for the church. More strongly than most Lutheran confessions, however, KO 1571 emphasizes that this ministry not only can, but should have more than one form. The church's ministry, being a divine institution, is characterized in the office of bishop as an apostolic and ecumenical mission, the gift of the Spirit in and for the church. (KO 1571, p.160 ff. The text has a current interest because it has put its stamp on the so-called Uppsala confession of 1909, written for theological dialogue. The text has also been used as an argument for the committee's

proposal for the new liturgical order for ordination in the Church of Sweden.)

The Roman Catholic Church speaks of one sacrament of ordination only, not of three. The councils have never said that the threefold nature of ministry in itself has been instituted by God or that it is *de iure divino* (according to divine law). On the contrary, the church teaches that "the divinely instituted ministry is practiced through different orders (*ordinibus*) by those who from the time of the early church were called bishops, presbyters and deacons." This is why the threefold structure has been labeled a divine appointment (*divina ordinatione*) (LG 28 with 63, DS1776).

Thus the descriptions and the evaluations in the documents of the Roman Catholic Church and the Church of Sweden are converging. The unity of the divinely instituted ministry is stressed, as well as the necessity of differentiated forms. It is not said thereby that the meaning is identical. We are aware of a historical evolution with all kinds of change within our traditions. This has presented obstacles that are not yet fully cleared away.

In the Roman Catholic Church during the Middle Ages the tendency escalated in debates about ministry to see the priest's service as the highest (subdeacon - deacon - priest). The office of bishop, appointed by papal letter, was then to be understood as of higher dignity (*dignitas*) on a scale of value; the function of episkopé tended to be drawn up solely in juridical categories. Vatican II, however, prepared for over a long period of time, clarified that the church's threefold ministry included episcopacy and hence the function of episkopé is practiced in virtue of the duties inherent in ordination (especially LG 21,26). Also clarifications were made concerning the different kinds of ministries for priests and deacons (LG 28,29). These became the basis for reforms, including the 1968 ordination rites, and the institution of a permanent diaconate. We are aware that several problems remain, also concerning those duties in the church that are close to the church's ministry.

The churches of the Reformation inherited a presbyterially conceived form of ministry from the medieval tradition. This can be traced in the confessional writings. In CA the proper office of bishop is contrasted with one which is abused (CA 28) while the office of the priest does not receive any special treatment but is considered as self-evident in the description of the church's ministry (CA 14 with 9, 28,5 and 7). A special and permanent diaconate is not even mentioned. In the Church of Sweden, the KO 1571 reads, as has been remarked already, that priests and bishops have different kinds of responsibilities according to their respective charges within the church's ministry. A permanent diaconate came into being only during the nineteenth century. We are aware that several problems remain concerning the permanent diaconate and concerning the duties in the church that are akin to the ministry of the church.

In an introduction to the new order for ordination, the Church of Sweden declares the following concerning the church's ministry:

In its act of ordination the church expresses that Christ through the Spirit calls people to lifelong service among the people of God for the sake of the gospel. This calling is confirmed by ordination.

The ordinations of bishop, priest and deacon equally express the fullness of the gospel, and the church's mission, coming from this gospel, is to be realized in both word and deed.

The word *Ämbete* is by tradition used in the Church of Sweden for the duties of priests and bishops. Other terms, such as mission, call, service are equivalent expressions for Christ's calling servants for his gospel.

In this perspective we agree with the ecumenical statement that "the threefold pattern stands in evident need of reform," and also that the threefold ministry is ecumenical capital from the early church which requires faithful and wise stewardship

so that the service in the church will be for the good of the church as the Lord expects (BEM Ministry 22,24, Luke 12:42 ff.). We acknowledge gratefully the recognition of their responsibility and the willingness to reconsider that has been expressed lately both by the Roman Catholic Church and by the Church of Sweden. Historical experiences and theological work have also deepened the insights from our traditions that the divinely instituted ministry is an undivided whole and that this ministry, of necessity, demands different types of duties, to be administered according to God's plan for the calling of his people and to fulfill his mission in and for the world. From this perspective we are prepared to discuss the sacramentality of the ministry and, especially, of the office of bishop.

The Church's Ministry as Sacrament

We have already noted that the church's ministry is described as sacrament, and ordination as a sacramental act according to the Roman Catholic Church but not according to the Church of Sweden. The significance of this needs examination.

Through some contemporary constitutions and the liturgical order for ordination of 1968 the Roman Catholic Church has made clear that persons are accepted for the ministries of bishop, priest and deacon and are brought into the church's sacramental ministry by laying on of hands and prayer (LG 20,21,26,28,29 and 41, apostolic constitution *Sacramentum ordinis* 1947 [DS 3857-3861], apostolic constitution *Pontificalis Romani recognitio* 1968 with *approbatur* of the order).

The main point in these documents is that the act celebrated by the people of God, inducts servants (*ministri*) for each duty (*munus*) within the service of the church (*ministerium ecclesiasticum*) which is also a sacramental community in the sense that we can hardly speak of particular ministers but rather of intimately associated "brothers," "co-workers" and "co-servants" in Christ through the Spirit for the service and for the sacramental *communio* of God's people. There are not three sacraments but one sacrament of ordination, since the

risen and living Christ is one and his servants are tied to him, and since the Father's elected people is one people in the unity of the Spirit.

According to the Roman Catholic Church the consecration of a bishop, who has the ministry in its fullness, is a sacrament and the office of bishop has a sacramental character. The word "sacramental" stands here not merely for a certain way of ordaining ministers by laying on of hands and prayer, but it reflects the view of the Catholic Church on the ministry in the sacramental community of the church.

The church not only preaches the reality of which the gospel speaks, it transmits it. Through its sacramental ministry the ministry of the church represents Jesus Christ at all times in the church. The sacramental character links Christ on the one side with the church and the ministry on the other.

The sacramental view of the church itself and of its ministry has been clearly expressed by Vatican II:

The church is namely in Christ a kind of sacrament, i.e. a sign and a tool...for the most intimate union with God... (LG nr 1).

Christ has given to his church... a visible structure on this earth and he upholds her unceasingly as such....The hierarchically organized community and the mystical body of Christ; the visible congregation and the spiritual community...may not be looked upon as two different things, but together they are one single multifaceted reality that comes into being through the union of the divine and the human element. Thus the church is similar, in an analogical and not so insignificant way, to the mystery of the incarnate Word (LG nr 8).

Concerning bishops, Vatican II continues:

In the bishops, assisted by the priests, the Lord, Jesus Christ, the High Priest is present. Sitting at the right hand of the Father, he is yet not far from the

congregations of his bishops. Through their sublime service he proclaims the Word of God for all people and always administers the sacrament of faith to the faithful... (LG nr 21).

Through its sacramental character the church and its episcopate in its temporal and visible Gestalt and structure points beyond itself to Christ in whose service it stands. This is the reason for the hierarchical structure of the church. LG nr 10:2 asserts that "the priesthood of all believers and the priesthood of the hierarchical ministry differ from each other in essence and not merely in degree." This sentence, often misunderstood, does not mark a difference in dignity but underlines that the hierarchical ministry is founded in the sacramental character of the church. In this sense the ministry contains a significant structural element in the temporal church constituted here on earth. Hence the ministry of the church, according to the view of the Roman Catholic Church, cannot be considered merely as a function or as a necessity that the Word is purely preached and the sacraments rightly administered. The ministry is in its structure a sacramental reality, a dowry co-existing with the church itself.

According to the Catholic view the episcopate is instituted as a college in the succession of the collegium of the apostles. One becomes a bishop by being incorporated into this college of bishops. Through consecration the bishop becomes a member of the college of bishops and as such he has responsibility for the local church where he is the head.

One becomes a member of the college of bishops through sacramental consecration and through hierarchical communion with the head and the members of the college (LG 22, from 1, finis).

In other words, through sacramental consecration the bishop becomes a member of the college of bishops. Through the bishop the local church becomes a part of the communion of the universal church and in its apostolic succession.

For an ecumenical approach it means that the question of apostolic succession cannot be solved merely through a detailed investigation into the validity of various ordinations throughout history. What will be decisive, however, is whether the Church of Sweden and the Roman Catholic Church, with special regard for the Church of Sweden's national particularity, are able to formulate their faith in such a way that both churches recognize themselves in one and the same faith.

In the Church of Sweden's Lutheran tradition it is important to make a clear distinction between the church's ministry and the ministers (Amt and person). The ministry of the church, the Spirit or the Word in itself, no doubt is counted as the mystery of faith through which the mysterious communion of the church has lived and will live for ever (CA 5,7). In the communion of saints the ministerial actions are efficacious for salvation even if they are administered by servants who are not conducting themselves in a Christian manner (CA 7,8). Misconduct does not nullify the acts but stresses the importance of right administration of ministry which is the duty of a servant, both publicly and in the communion of the saints (CA 14,28). CA expressed this matter briefly since its aim was to emphasize the agreement with common doctrine in all churches. As an introduction to the order of ordination for persons selected to serve in the church or in its preaching ministry, KO 1571 asserts that this ministry is not:

some work of men but the order of God himself and of our Lord, Jesus Christ who powerfully bears it up, and works forcefully thereby...lives with us, listens to us and helps us, and makes us heirs of eternal blessedness (KO 1571, pp. 137 ff.).

According to the Apologia of the CA, the term sacrament ought to be reserved for acts that God has commanded for the salvation of the receiver. Otherwise, the ministry of the church could very well be called a sacrament and ordination a sacramental act because the ministry has "God's command" (*mandatum*), and added to this are all his "magnificent promises"

(*magnificas promissiones*). One could therefore also call ordination or "the laying on of hands" a sacrament (Confessional writings of the Church of Sweden, pp. 293 ff., 223). The term sacrament is not used in KO, either for "the divine order and gift" of the ministry or for the ordination of ministers by "the preachers together with the congregations." It is not for the salvation of the ministers that ordination takes place. On the contrary, the ministry is necessary for bringing people to salvation and thereby is "a blessed church governance and not some work by the people's wisdom or power, but the work of God and our Lord Jesus Christ" - in the ministry (John 15:5 ff.) and in ordination (Mt. 9:37 ff.) according to KO 1571 (p.139).

It is obvious that the Church of Sweden document safeguards a ministry divinely instituted and preserved through which God himself "works forcefully" in the communion of saints. For this sacramental communion people are ordained for different duties through prayer and the laying on of hands "since the Holy Spirit...is commonly given through such means" (KO 1571, p.141 ff.). If a theological-sacramental terminology were to be used which, per se, should not be impossible, then the church's ministry is sacramental and ordination is a sacramental act, with the laying on of hands as *materia* and the ordination prayer as form. If the Reformation distinction between ministry and minister is translated into sacramental-theological language, the human ministers are selected as bearers of redeeming gifts, not by their own powers but by Christ, through the Spirit, for the Father's chosen people.

This basic view has also been expressed in the introduction to the new order for ordination in the Church of Sweden (see above).

We are aware that the differences in the use of language in our traditions can enrich and correct the theological work necessary to interpret continuously the divine reality in and for the church that shapes the ministry. The distinction between the bearer of ministry and the ministry itself emphasizes that

God himself creates and upholds saving faith through the gospel, the true treasure of the church. It underscores the right and duty of the faithful to test whether it is God's voice and guidance they hear and follow, and the duty of the ordained to serve the church after the mind of Christ and in the power of the Spirit. Sacramental theology asserts the unfathomable notion that God himself acts in his church through human tools. It tells the faithful that God through his servants gives his gifts and his guidance. It underlines the duties of the ordained to fulfill the ministry in an unreserved and responsible manner in and for the church in intimate communion with Christ and with colleagues in the same ministry of the church. Mutually challenging are the trinitarian and ecclesiological perspectives on the essence and duty of ministry that, starkly summarized, are expressed in the chief terms from the New Testament: service - ministerium - diakonia. The perspectives can and should be made more clear and more consistently mark our traditions, organizational structures and practice.

The Sacramentality of the Office of Bishop

We have already noted above that the Roman Catholic Church and the Church of Sweden without reservation concur in the understanding that the office of bishop contains a special mission in the church's ministry. According to the Roman Catholic Church the office of bishop is a sacrament and consecration is a sacramental act. The sacramental-theological use of language is foreign to the Church of Sweden tradition but, as we here have interpreted the sacramental, it is possible even in the Church of Sweden to speak of the office of bishop as a sacrament and of consecration as a sacramental act. What must be considered further in this connection is how we speak of the sacramental office of bishop in relation to other forms within the church's ministry.

As we noted earlier, the Roman Catholic Church has made clear in Vatican II that "the ministerial sacrament in its fullness is given through episcopal ordination" (*plenitudinem*

conferri sacramenti ordinis) (LG 21). Participating in the office are the priests "on their level of ministry" (*in suo gradu ministerii*) and also the deacons "on a lower level" (*in gradu inferioro*) (LG 28,29). The Swedish tradition rejects a hierarchically ordered theology. We are aware that resistance to this is rooted in a medieval development which brought with it the idea that each level of ordination was understood as a step toward ever higher dignity up to the priest's, and after that the bishop's still higher dignity. We are aware that the Swedish tradition in reality has been marked also by such a gradation which has even been publicly declared (for instance, when KL 1686:21 speaks of some who are "not only" priests but due to "greater gifts" have been appointed bishops, or when the royal decree of 1805 says about the episcopal cross that it distinguishes the bishops "over" the priests as "a sign to prove their ministerial dignity and leadership").

We are aware of the temptation that always has been there, and always will be, that some count as, or act as, rulers with power over the people although it should not be that way among God's people (Mark 10:42 *ff.*). For this reason it is urgent that theological work be done on the relation between the different duties and their incumbents within the ministry of the church. We are aware that the committee's motivation for the new order of ordination in the Church of Sweden speaks out of a perspective of salvation about differentiated duties not as a gradation in the church but for reasons of economy. Economy here means distributing the duties according to a divine pattern (*cf.* Eph. 4:11). Such perspective defines the introductory passage to the order for ordination which we cited above.

We find it very important that the communal and the collegial motifs of Vatican II within a framework of sacramental theology counteract tendencies to apply gradation of dignity and worth within the ministries for God's people. Those who become part of the church's ministry by ordination are thereby incorporated in a college of co-servants in order to work for the commonweal of the church in mutual cooperation. In this the office of bishop, according to the Roman Catholic Church and

the Church of Sweden, provides "a blessed church governance" (KO 1571, p. 139) necessary for coordination, cohesion and leadership of the church. An essential consequence of the community and collegiality motifs is that the individual bishop is incorporated into the college of bishops which has joint personal responsibility for the calling, the shepherding and the uniting of the church. This duty is exercised in cooperation with others in ministry and with all believers. There is no human guarantee against misuse and deviations. The diocese finds, nevertheless, its protection in the college of bishops that shares responsibility for the bishop who does not fulfill his calling.

9. APOSTOLIC SUCCESSION IN THE CHURCH AND IN ITS MINISTRY

The Church's Apostolicity and its Apostolic Ministry

We confess together with all Christians the belief in one, holy, and catholic church that is apostolic. We join in the trinitarian, christological and ecclesiological perspective on apostolicity that, in the contemporary dialogue concerning doctrine, has been formulated as follows:

The Church lives in continuity with the apostles and their proclamation. The same Lord who sent the apostles continues to be present in the Church. The Spirit keeps the Church in the apostolic tradition until the fulfillment of history in the Kingdom of God. Apostolic tradition in the Church means continuity in the permanent characteristics of the Church of the apostles: witness to the apostolic faith, proclamation and progressive interpretation of the Gospel, celebration of baptism and the Eucharist, the transmission of ministerial responsibilities, communion in prayer, love, joy and suffering, service to the sick and the needy, unity among the local churches and sharing the gifts which the Lord has given to each (BEM Ministry 34).

The church's apostolicity is a sign of its origin and its everlasting foundation in the atoning death and resurrection of Christ, and its call to receive, interpret and live according to the unique witness that the apostles gave (1 Cor. 15:11 ff., 1 John 1:1 ff.). The apostles were the first mediators of the gospel, of the tradition about Christ's saving words and acts that is the foundation for the life of the church. This apostolic tradition continues through history joining the church with its roots in Christ and in the collegiality of the apostles. The New Testament and early patristic period stressed the contents side of continuity for the faith and the life of the church. Later the Lutheran tradition speaks in this connection rather of a *successio verbi* (the succession of the Word). Even today the

continuity of content is considered most important in Catholic theology.

Within the apostolic tradition, apostolic succession of ministry serves the continuity in the life of the church in Christ and its faithfulness to the words and acts of Jesus as mediated by the apostles (*cf.* BEM Ministry 34, commentary). The church's ministry is thus included in the apostolicity of the church and is an expression of its catholicity. Originally and continually the witness of the gospel is bound up with those other forms. The bearers of ministry are called to be guardians of the faith. Continuity in ministry in and for the church preserves the authentic witness (*cf.* BEM Ministry 34-35, GA 60-61).

The Two Aspects of Apostolicity Concerning Ministry

Since around the year 100 AD the office of bishop has been considered an apostolic sign from two different perspectives that, however, must both be held together. Clement of Rome called attention to the unbroken line back in history to the continuity of ministry from the Father sending the Son, the Son sending the apostles who, in turn, sent their successors in an unbroken chain. Ignatius of Antioch saw apostolicity manifested by the bishop, surrounded by presbyters and deacons, leading the liturgy and the life of the people in God's congregation. Thereby the actual communion in the Spirit of the church around Christ was made visible (BEM Ministry 36, commentary). In both cases the visible sign of apostolicity was the bishop as leader of the (town) congregation. When circumstances changed and the bishops became leaders of larger areas, the accent fell primarily on the aspect of historical continuity. A tendency to look on apostolicity in a juridical sense and as a technical test for ordination developed later.

The Roman Catholic Church attaches great importance to the historic succession of the episcopacy, both as witness to and sign of the apostolicity of the church. The primary continuity, however, is not the continuity of persons, the unbroken chain from ordinator to ordinands, but the continuity in the

episcopal seats of the dioceses which, when vacant, have always been occupied again by new members in the church's college of bishops so that episkopé has been continuous (*Facing Unity*, 110). This perspective on the historical continuity can very well agree with the sacramental perspective that Ignatius proposed. Also Vatican II combined the historical and the sacramental perspectives in its description of the office of bishop in and for the church. This is clearly expressed in the new liturgy for the consecration of bishops (LG 20, with references to both Clement and Ignatius among others, but especially to the *homilia* for the consecration of bishops in the Pontificale of 1968, GA 61-62).

The Church of Sweden concentrates, as other Lutheran churches do, primarily on the undivided ministry of the church. In CA the historical continuity of the church and of ministry are linked together. Practice of this ministry is the prerequisite for the continuity of the church and its sacramental reality. The word "sacramental" is not in CA. But since it claims that the outward means are necessary it comes close to the use of that term (CA 5,7,14, the end of the 21 articles, and at the beginning and at the end of the articles on misuse, GA 64-66). In KO 1571 we find both aspects, the historical and the sacramental. The line of continuity stretches backward to the very beginning when the Word was with God and as "the first preacher" worked all through the old covenant to the times when the then incarnate Son sent his apostles. In this ministry, handed down in an unbroken chain, Christ is in a sacramental way "working and living with us" (KO 1571, p. 137 ff.). What is valid about the church's ministry is thereby also valid for the bishop's ministry, from the time of the apostles, being a necessary gift of the Spirit that "must" be preserved and retained "as long as the world stands" (KO 1571, p.160 ff.). This historical line of continuity marks the so-called Uppsala Confession of 1909, composed for dialogue with other churches. Obligated to form its rules "under the guidance of the Spirit" the Church of Sweden has also adopted forms for the ministry that constitute "a gift, given to us, by the God of history" in order to

"present God's revelation to the people" (KÅ 1911, p. 103 ff.). Today this view has been accentuated by the fact that the bishops, by virtue of their office, are members of the Board of Doctrine which is to guard the apostolic faith.

We are aware that the historical perspective on the office of bishop as a sign of apostolicity has been dominant in our traditions. The sacramental perspective, though present all along, also in the Church of Sweden, has emerged more in our day. We are also aware of other tendencies in our traditions. But the main direction on the succession of ministry to apostolic service in and for the church has been markedly strengthened. We are furthermore aware that the Roman Catholic Church, concerning apostolic succession, continues the line from the early church that ties the succession to the office of bishop, while the Church of Sweden ties it to the church's undivided ministry. Before looking into the meaning of these observations we need to touch somewhat on the subject of historical continuity in ordination.

The Succession in Ordination to the Church's Ministry

The Roman Catholic Church holds the office of bishop as principal basis for succession. Therefore the assignment to perform ordinations is given to the episcopate. Those who assist at a consecration of a bishop have always themselves been consecrated. This does not mean that in the course of history only bishops have been consecrators in the sacrament of ordination. Abbots and their successors in some German, French and English monasteries during the fifteenth century received papal permission to ordain people to the various sacramental degrees of ordination. The Roman Catholic Church law of 1917 summarizes the development. It defines the bishop as the regular ordinator while others "according to law" or with papal permission have received the authority to ordain (*potestas ordinis conferendi*, CJC 1917, 951). The wording of the law doubtlessly meant primarily to take care of the extraordinary situations on the mission fields for some of the religious

orders. Some presbyterial ordination had been legitimate even in Europe, though in Europe there were rather many more bishops, relatively speaking, which is a fact that has been given importance in ecumenical dialogues (GA 76). We consider this law to be a manifestation of a certain legal way of thinking that today has been replaced by a more sacramental view of the office. Today only bishops are allowed to ordain even if priests may participate in the laying on of hands at the ordination of other priests.

In the Church of Sweden, which differs from several other Lutheran churches since it retained the office of bishop at the time of the Reformation, the commission to ordain belongs to the bishop. As mentioned above, Sweden has also had, simultaneously for a while, an institution of superintendents. The ordained superintendents did regularly ordain people to the church's ministry. When bishops were for some reason prevented from attending, deans of the cathedral also ordained after a special license had been issued. At the consecration of a bishop, however, the consecrator has without exception been a bishop. Normally the archbishop is the consecrator.

We are aware of these circumstances in our traditions when we state that the episcopal right and duty to ordain has been considered normal procedure and also the most dominant practice. We are aware of the importance assigned to other forms of ordination in negotiations between churches when we state that the episcopal right and duty to ordain must be considered obligatory. Our main reason is that the episkopé function is tied to the office of bishop and the task of ordaining ought not to be taken out of this context.

We now resume the discussion of the theological meaning of the succession in our two traditions and of the office as a sign of apostolicity.

The Succession of Office as Sign of and Means for the Apostolicity of the Church

The term apostolicity contains something fundamental: that the church always has been and always will be bound by the apostolic witness to a living Christ as the light and salvation of the world. The Father's chosen people is a people who are no longer strangers but incorporated into the body of Christ so as to go through the ages toward the Father in the power of the Spirit. Through the Spirit a living temple is built on the foundation of the apostles with Christ as a cornerstone (Eph. 2:11 *ff.*, 19 *ff.*). The mystery of Christ is revealed in the gospel that the apostles passed on. And for the continuing revelation we are served by the gospel (Eph. 3:4 *ff.*, 4:8 *ff.*). As a summary and a superior task for the divinely instituted shepherd ministry in and for the church, the preaching of the gospel is mentioned in both our traditions (for the Roman Catholic Church, especially about bishops, LG 20, 24, 25, and for the Church of Sweden, about the whole ministry, CA 28 [with 7 and 14], KO 1571, pp. 160 *ff.*, including the special reading at the consecration of bishops, Luke 12:42 *ff.*, Ser. C. Manual 1988).

For the calling and sending of the church to witness in the world there is a special part in the ordination service concerned with the preaching of the gospel and the guiding ministry. In order to preserve the church on its apostolic foundation, that is Christ, we must think of how to continue building in accordance with the apostolic witness (1 Cor. 3:10 *ff.*, 1 Pet. 2:4 *ff.*). We cannot mechanically repeat but must interpret the entrusted material so that it is not distorted in vain but communicates the gospel in changing times and circumstances according to an apostolic "pattern for sound preaching" (2 Tim. 1:6 *ff.*, 13 *ff.*, 2:1 *ff.*, 4:1 *ff.*, etc., BEM Ministry 34). Likewise the church must continue to forward its sacramental life and keep its basic organization according to Christ's directions.

The succession of ministry should be dealt with in this context. The church may not be and has never been without servants who have succeeded each other following the apostles in the

service of preaching the Gospel for the saints. Since we here focus on the episkopé function within the church's ministry it is important to state that the task of supervision certainly also has an administrative-juridical side, but it goes together with the more comprehensive task to guard the preaching in its various dimensions (*martyria, leiturgia, diakonia*) expressing the apostolic tradition "purely and clearly."

In the Roman Catholic Church, the college of bishops has the final responsibility for the preservation of the pure apostolic faith and the unity of the church. In the tradition of the Church of Sweden, the office of bishop is a necessary guardian of the purity of the faith and the unity of the church. (For the Roman Catholic Church, especially LG 20-27, and for the Church of Sweden, CA 7,28, KO 1571, pp. 160 ff., and liturgies for ordination from both traditions.) Both traditions ask for the Spirit's guidance. Both churches count on the possibility, however, that an individual bishop might betray the apostolic mission. In that case the tool of the church according to the Church of Sweden's Lutheran tradition is God's steadfast promise and the duty of all the faithful to test apostolicity. In the Roman Catholic tradition, the bishops' college together with the Bishop of Rome are the tools for testing (CA 8,28, KO 1571, p. 140, LG 22). Both traditions hold that he who betrays his duty forfeits his right to serve as a bishop. (We do not here deal with problems of discipline and the application of the rules.)

The succession of ordination and its transmission belong in this context to apostolic episkopé. To the call of a bishop belongs testing/confirmation. The main criterion for suitability is that the candidate holds the apostolic faith. (From this perspective it has been wrong in principle that the right of appointing bishops in the Church of Sweden lies in the hands of the government without a built-in requirement for testing apostolicity, even if it could be presumed that the electorate had tested it before the election.) In the liturgy of consecration in both traditions, the bishop elect gives his promises and recites his confession of the faith in the midst of God's

congregation. Thus the congregation's right to test is realized and the duty of the bishops fulfilled who attest by their presence to the apostolicity that is the very prerequisite for sending by consecration.

That the consecration is done "in an apostolic way...through prayer and laying on of hands in the name of God" (The order for consecration in the Church of Sweden, 1988) is an expression for the conviction that the episcopal mission presupposes the gift of the Spirit. Both liturgies refer to this gift that must be kept alive so that the bishop will be able to provide the church's apostolicity in the future (1 Tim. 4:14, 2 Tim. 1:6).

Hence the consecration liturgies of our traditions both witness to a succession of ministry and to an ordination both in a historic and a sacramental sense, although it is more obvious in the newer than in the older liturgies for consecration. They clearly say that God has appointed shepherds and priests and has not left his temple without servants (The prayer at the consecration of bishops in the 1968 pontifical). The liturgy also manifests the church as the apostolic community in Christ and in faith.

This main perspective on the meaning of the succession of office and on ordination as an apostolic sign in and for the church we find made manifest in our contemporary traditions. We are aware that the theological interpretations are converging, but they do not coincide, depending to a great extent on the fact that the starting point in the Roman Catholic Church is collegial episcopacy while in the Church of Sweden it is the undivided ministry. The main perspective does not exclude but includes also legal and other formal aspects. If succession is characterized as the form through which the apostolic tradition is mediated and actualized in witness, worship and service, then it may be stated that the meaning of the succession, as a sign of apostolicity, also requires due forms. These are legitimate in their nature and are to be respected in their rightful context. We are aware that our traditions have a history that has given room for tendencies to over- or underestimate

the importance of formal claims. In addition, there have been tendencies to distrust the apostolicity of each other's tradition on the basis of certain side-issues.

One question we have not touched upon in our deliberations concerns the possibility of finding ways to hold a real ecumenical council that includes the question of the Petrine ministry. We can, however, agree with GA 6773.

The Collegiality of Bishops Around the Office of Peter

The Roman Catholic Church is a universal church and sees the worldwide community as made concrete by the college of bishops around the representative in the office of Peter, the pope, who himself exercises the jurisdictional primacy over the whole church (*Facing Unity*, 100-103).

The Church of Sweden is a national church that does not presuppose universal church leadership but is itself governed in a complex system of boards and committees, by church and state working together.

At the consecration of a bishop this difference comes to light since the Roman Catholic Church requires that the appointment be cleared by the pope to make the consecration legitimate. And since this has not been the case in Sweden after the year 1528, the Roman Catholic Church views the Swedish episcopate as illegitimate. Later in the sixteenth century the whole of the Church of Sweden strayed from the true faith, according to the Catholics. In 1583 Pope Gregory sent a message to the King of Sweden, John III, stating that, after an investigation made by a commission of cardinals, the consecration of Swedish bishops was not a legitimate act from a Catholic viewpoint. In contemporary theological thinking the question has again been raised but without definite conclusions (*cf.* Th. von Haag, L.M. Dewailly, S. Kjöllerström, Å. v. Ström, *et al.*).

From the Catholic side, unity with Peter's successor in Rome is considered theologically very important since the pope's essential task is to guard the unity of all local churches (the

national or regional parts of the universal church). The church that slips away from unity with Rome also severs itself from unity with other local churches. We can see historically how the isolation of the Swedish church increased during the 17th and 18th centuries. Swedish students at Lutheran universities even had to submit to travel control.

On the other hand we must stress that, even during the time of Archbishop Laurentius Petri, the Church of Sweden wished to retain continuity with the medieval church and thereby with the universal and apostolic church. The Church of Sweden has always considered itself to be the true church of Christ in Sweden. After the isolation of the 17th and 18th centuries it became more and more common to have contact with other churches. After the time of Archbishop Nathan Söderblom it became the practice that bishops, not only from other Swedish dioceses but also from other churches, assist in the laying on of hands, thereby expressing that the Church of Sweden is united with the rest of Christianity. The Church of Sweden's engagement in the Lutheran World Federation and the World Council of Churches, plus its agreement on intercommunion with the Church of England and other churches, is a sign that this communion goes deeper than being a mere gesture of friendship. The Church of Sweden wants in this manner to contribute to the re-establishment of unity within the universal church.

Furthermore, in several dialogues Lutheran theologians have been able to acknowledge the Petrine office as a visible sign of unity in the universal church (GA 64). Especially in the Lutheran-Catholic dialogue in the USA the importance of the Petrine office for Christian unity in time and space (i.e., the church's apostolicity and catholicity) has been stressed in various ways as having a positive value. We in Sweden have not yet touched upon this problematic question in our dialogue. Certain signs connoting a change of attitude can be noted within the Church of Sweden. At Vatican II Bishop Sven Silén was an observer representing the Lutheran World Federation. Archbishops Sundby and Werkström have visited the pope.

The Church of Sweden has also shown a strong interest in participating in the pope's visit to Sweden.

Finally, we note that neither the Orthodox nor the oriental churches acknowledge the universal jurisdiction of the office of the pope as valid for them. Catholics do not think that this denial per se invalidates the Orthodox episcopate since the unity between the Orthodox and the Catholic churches is warm in spite of this disagreement and embraces all essential elements so that they acknowledge each other as sister churches with valid consecrations.

Defects in the Sacrament of Ordination

Concerning the formal requirements for an ordination service, we want to begin by differentiating between two views: the necessity of historic continuity at the consecration on the one hand, and the actual possession of succession on the other.

The Roman Catholic Church demands, as a prerequisite for consecration and thereby for continuity, that the apostolic office is received within the visible community of people who confess the church's faith and from bishops who themselves have become part of the apostolic succession through a rite of laying on of hands with prayer - a rite that goes back to the apostles (*cf. L'apostolicité de l'Eglise et la succession apostolique*, in *Documentation Catholique* 1974, pp. 612-618). If these prerequisites are not fulfilled the consecrated person is not considered to be a bishop. The necessary continuity of the apostolic succession is assumed to have been broken.

In spite of differing views on the Petrine office, the Roman Catholic Church holds that not only itself but also the Orthodox churches have kept the reality of succession in ministry. The Roman Catholic Church has instituted a dialogue with the Anglican Communion concerning interpretation of its historic evolution. Of the other Reformation churches it is said that they are so different, even from one another, that they must be scrutinized one by one.

The Church of Sweden claims that in spite of the changes introduced by the Reformation it has retained continuity at consecrations of bishops. Therefore also the present bishops have apostolic succession. The Church of Sweden claims further that it is not necessary that the office be fitted into the historic episcopate in the manner described above (*cf.* dialogues between the Church of Sweden and the Anglican church concerning intercommunion, 1920-1922, and also the response by the Church Assembly to the Lima document, 1985).

This twofold attitude of the Church of Sweden explains some modern ecumenical phenomena. The Church of England has recognized the presence of apostolic succession in the Church of Sweden as sufficient grounds for intercommunion. At the same time the Church of Sweden has intercommunion with non-episcopal churches. The Danish and Norwegian sister-churches accept the Swedish claims to the apostolic succession but they themselves do not consider it necessary in the Catholic sense and, unlike the Church of England, they do not allow Swedish bishops to participate in the laying on of hands at their consecrations of bishops in Denmark and Norway.

How then do the Roman Catholic Church and the Church of Sweden judge one another's consecrations? Without proclaiming it officially, it follows from the Lutheran view of ministry that the Church of Sweden acknowledges the apostolic succession of the Roman Catholic bishops. From that side there are no obstacles in principle to be removed. The Roman Catholic Church on the other hand has acted as if the Church of Sweden's episcopate did not have apostolic succession (e.g., by re-ordaining priests from the Church of Sweden who have converted and are to be received into the Catholic priesthood). But the Roman Catholic Church has not formally raised the question in modern times, partly because they have been waiting for a more precise statement from the Church of Sweden concerning its view of ministry.

To come closer to a solution to the question of ordination the problem of apostolic succession should be related to the aim of the Reformation in the sixteenth century. We cannot discuss how to acknowledge each other's offices without clarifying the Church of Sweden's ecclesiological status since the schism of the sixteenth century (cf. *Facing Unity*, 118 and 124). At this stage we have not grappled with this overarching question. We have only tried to come to an agreement in our views on episcopacy. In the following paragraphs we shall limit ourselves to a short analysis of the Roman Catholic Church's scruples or hesitations concerning the act of consecration.

Vatican II notes (in an auxiliary sentence) that full ecclesiastical unity between the Roman Catholic Church and the Reformation churches is missing due to, among other things, *defectus sacramenti ordinis* (UR 22). The term was first translated "lacking the sacrament of ordination" in the Swedish translation of 1967. Today the term is rather "the defect in the sacrament of ordination," in other words, not a non-existent but a defective sacrament or an absence of the full developed sacrament (in GA 76-78 and in *Facing Unity*, 95 and 124). The consequences of that view are that the defects in the sacramental and collegial structure of the episcopate may be put right by improvements and completions so that the office can be included, and practiced, in the whole universal church. Cardinal Willebrands suggests this possibility for the Anglican Communion in his letter of 13 July 1985 to the two chairmen of the Anglican-Catholic discussion group (Information Service 1986, pp. 23-25). In addition, the Roman Catholic Church seems to think that the Reformation churches show certain defects in the formal demands at the act of consecration itself. These must be corrected as an expression of the incorporation of the office into the sacrament's fullness. They concern right "*materia*" which means that the consecration is performed by a bishop who himself in turn was consecrated according to all the rules and who is now sending on the episcopacy by the laying on of hands and praying over the new bishop. Next, they concern right "*forma*" (i.e., words that in one way or another

express what is taking place). The ordination prayer is commonly understood as *forma*. It has to state clearly that a bishop is being consecrated. Finally, a right "*intentio*," a will to do what the church does, is required from both the ordinator and the ordinand.

Concerning *materia*, the Church of Sweden (together with the Anglican churches) holds a unique position in the whole of Protestant Christianity since, through the centuries, the Church of Sweden has continued to fulfill some of these demands. At the consecrations of bishops the Church of Sweden has retained an unbroken chain. Bishop has been consecrated by bishop through laying on of hands and prayer. The so-called material succession has been kept. There has been controversy whether, outside of the laying on of hands, also chrism and/or the giving of the book of the Gospel and the episcopal insignia (ring, crozier and mitre) must also take place. Since the Church of Sweden lacks some of these traditional elements, Catholic theologians have earlier rejected its material succession. Today the opinion is more nuanced (cf. L-M. Dewailly, 1938, Th. van Haag, 1944, N.H. Lindblad, *Chrism as an ordination obstacle*, 1984, pp. 98 ff.).

The Church of Sweden has, furthermore, always had *forma*, an ordination prayer, even though it eventually was shortened to just "Our Father" with the motivation that this prayer is the most powerful prayer for God's grace and Jesus himself has taught it. Compared with the medieval Catholic rite it has become less clear to which office the ordinand is ordained. But many Catholic theologians think that the necessary definition of the character of the office can be gleaned from other prayers or expressions in the rite of the whole consecration service. The rubrics in the Swedish manual and other expressions make it crystal clear that it deals with consecration of a bishop. And the manual (HB 1988) has included an ordination epiclesis.

The follow-up question then is this: has the Church of Sweden the same view of the episcopate as the Roman Catholic

Church? That question no longer concerns the right form but the right intention.

Have the Swedish bishops at consecration intended to do what the Roman Catholic Church has had in mind? Have they had the right intention? Up until our time the general consensus among Catholic theologians has been "no." They held the view that it was, after all, a different kind of ministry, both because the Church of Sweden claims unity of ministry as fundamental without any essential difference between bishop, priest and deacon, and because the Church of Sweden denies the sacrificial character of the Eucharist and thereby the priest's mission to "present Christ's sacrifice for the living and the dead."

These articles of faith that were accepted in the sixteenth century brought with them changes also in the rite of ordination. In other ways too these changes expressed an aversion among the leaders of the Church of Sweden to remain in communion with the Catholic Church, or rather, with the pope. The Roman Catholic Church has therefore questioned Swedish ordinations, viewing them not only as illegitimate but also as invalid (*cf.* Dewailly and v. Haag).

Today we may ask whether this judgment is still relevant or whether it can be revised. Is it enough that ordinator and ordinand see their ministry as a teaching, sanctifying and governing ministerium, such as we have just described it? Or is it required that they share traditional Catholic views of priesthood and sacrifice, of the difference between bishop and priest, and on the apostolic succession itself? These are just examples of questions that have to be examined more closely.

Furthermore, we think that the whole question of apostolic succession must be put in relation to the goal of the Reformation in the sixteenth century. We cannot discuss acknowledgement of each other's ministry apart from a clarification of the Church of Sweden's ecclesiological status after the schism in the sixteenth century (*cf.* *Facing Unity*, 118 and 124). In this study we have not dealt with this overarching issue but merely tried to find unity between us concerning our views on the office of bishop.

10. THE CHURCH AND ITS EPISCOPATE IN A DEMOCRATIC SOCIETY

An Institutional Church and the Responsibility of God's People

The church and its ministry is not only obliged to have institutional forms, but as a sacramental community it ought to have them. These institutional forms should express as clearly as possible what is unique to the church, precisely because the ministerial mission must express the church's sending and calling. That applies, of course, also for the episcopate.

We have already mentioned that our churches have organizational traits that need changing so that the people of God can function responsibly. They are heirs in baptism and in faith and have the rights of citizenship (Eph. 2:19, 3:6 *ff.*). Organizational reforms that foster the co-responsibility of those who through baptism and faith belong to God's people should be seriously considered. Any kind of guardianship where the people are merely objects for the church's activities is wrong. All leadership must be practiced in such a way that the apostolic witness liberates the talents of the members to witness, worship and support.

In our churches we have counseling and decision-making agencies on various levels in which elected representatives take responsibility for planning and leading the activities. During the Middle Ages, Sweden developed a kind of fusion between canonical and Nordic jurisdiction which manifested itself in the right of a parish to elect its own parish priest, in the duty to ensure that the church was well maintained, and so on. As a kind of follow-up to that heritage both the Catholic Diocese of Stockholm and the Church of Sweden are now reforming some institutional agencies to make them more serviceable in a modern society. The question is raised whether and how the form-giving forces of Swedish society can or should be a model also for the organization of the church as it strives faithfully to preserve the apostolic heritage.

A Democratic Society

There were many kinds of impulses and historic processes that brought about democratic concepts. The democratic idea has undergone various changes but one fundamental component lies in the influence of the people on different areas and levels of government. In Sweden the struggle for democracy harks back to the old Nordic heritage. General political suffrage, however, was first realized in the twentieth century and a parliamentary system in its fullness was not realized until the beginning of the 1920s. These are both expressions of the idea that all power comes from the people. The age-old right of the Swedish people to tax itself changed into a principle of the sovereignty of the people which is now written into the Swedish constitution. Society has become secularized in the sense that people do not submit to any other authority than that which the people's elected representatives draw up by law.

This notion of democracy is purely formal, a system based on general suffrage. The Swedish constitution lacks on the whole overarching avowals of human rights. In addition the constitution is changeable and its content negotiable. Political democracy has no special content except the conviction that democratic procedure is the right form for decision-making. Certainly the aim through this system is to get the right formula for arriving at the greatest possible justice in society. But the moral values that govern all lawmaking are thus based on the convictions of those decision-makers who are elected representatives of the people.

The People's Sovereignty and the Church's Apostolicity

Clearly the principle of the sovereignty of the people clashes with the church's absolute bond with the unchangeable apostolic witness. The content of the apostolic faith cannot be decided by majority vote. The gospel must be interpreted and the meaning of the apostolic witness after the apostolic model must be applied in different circumstances and situations. For this we need cooperation and negotiation in representative

agencies. Democratic work-forms offer fine possibilities but there are also certain risks if the sovereignty of the gospel has not influenced the work-forms. We agree with the statement from the Doctrinal Board in the Church Assembly of 1985. It concludes: "The faith and life of the church is built on the gospel of Jesus Christ that is non-negotiable. It is fundamental also when dealing with the church's external orders and work-forms" (the Church of Sweden Church Assembly's doctrinal board, 1985:23).

The norms of the gospel must be asserted in a secularized society. Those who share the Christian faith and are members of the church are not wholly sovereign. Jesus Christ is the head of the church and all the members of the body are bound by his commandments (Eph. 4:15 *ff.*). It is he who has appointed some apostles, others prophets, others teachers (1 Cor. 12:28). The person Jesus Christ remains the head of the church for all centuries. He leads his people through those persons who are elected to ministry and whose consecration remains with them for life. This fundamental phenomenon in the church must not be taken from the people of God, even in the name of the people of God.

At the same time we want also to stress that the church in Swedish society is a part of that society and must cooperate with it. The members of the church and its own governmental boards must stick to the rules of society as long as these do not directly oppose the Christian faith. In church government there are, in principle, possibilities for applying new forms which already function in the surrounding society. In the spirit of modern ecumenical dialogue we wish "that the ordained ministry be practiced in a personal, collegial, and community-oriented way" (BEM Ministry 26), and that "the office of bishop must serve the *koinonia* of the local church in a threefold manner: personal, collegial, and in cooperation with the congregation" (EVU 113-116. *cf.* also Vaticanum II, GS 43).

It is therefore urgent that these basic views are expressed clearly in organizational forms. They ought to portray the

particularity of the church as well as possible. They ought to be permanent reminders of the rights of God's people and be a standing invitation to its representatives to act responsibly in their work of leadership and planning for the church. One of the consequences must be that the church's ministry organizationally is acknowledged as a gift from God in and for the church.

The Responsibility, the Rights and the Role of the People of God

We are aware that the conditions are quite different in the Roman Catholic Church and the Church of Sweden. In the Roman Catholic Church the older principle of having its central government in Rome has been complemented at Vatican II with a principle that the local church, each in its place, embodies the Church of Christ (LG 26). In the diocesan church with its parishes, not only the bishop but the whole congregation of the faithful carry the responsibility for the putting into practice of the gospel (LG 12, GS 43 ff.). Accordingly, the Catholic Diocese of Sweden strives to find serviceable forms for cooperation and collaboration within diocese and parishes. In his Lenten Letter of 1987 the diocesan bishop has also pointed to the responsibility of the laity in their family life, in their profession and workplace, in political and social life, and within the life of the church (Hubertus Brandenburg, *Om lekfolkets år*, 1987).

The Church of Sweden, on the other hand, as a national church has a historic heritage including an organization with intricate relations with the state and its official administration. In the ongoing work to reform the organizational structures and to change the relationship to the state, one main issue comes to the fore: how can we combine democratically functioning agencies on various levels with the church's character of a community of faith, with its confession and doctrine given in advance?

In our deliberations we have returned many times to the serious tendency (from a theological standpoint) we have observed in the reforms of the Church of Sweden. Historically given forms for cooperation between ministers and elected lay representatives on local, regional and national levels have been broken up and given over to agencies consisting of people chosen from the political parties in "common democratic order." In these agencies the ordained ministers have no seat as a matter of course since "a splitting up into categories" is seen as going against the principles of democracy. At the same time it is asserted that the church as a community of faith has doctrinal questions which need special treatment. The church's ministry and especially its bishops have responsibility for these. Under the formula "the twin line of responsibility" it is claimed that the ministers are responsible for "spiritual matters" in the church while the elected representatives decide everything else with accountability to the voters.

We think it is damaging to separate out organizational questions as if they did not concern the church as a sacramental community. Likewise it is damaging to set aside doctrinal questions as if they were not connected to other issues in the church as institution. The clear tendency to split the responsibility must be seen also as a contradiction to the model for democratic cooperation among God's people which includes everyone, ministers and elected representatives alike, in the whole people of God taking responsibility for the calling and sending of the church.

In our deliberations we do not wish to distance ourselves from the attempts made to find better forms for cooperation and collaboration. Such attempts are no less urgent from a theological point of view. The presupposition must be that they aim to give a better and clearer expression for what is the essence and mission of the church.

We note with satisfaction that a special theological working group has been called together and that it has produced a report about the composition of the Church Assembly and how it

proceeds with its work on bigger issues which thereby gain clearer doctrinal implications.

The Office of Bishop and Democratic Forms in the Church

It is right that the people of God should share responsibility in appointing new bishops, for instance by participating in the election of the bishop who will become a member of that collegium which through the ages has carried the primary responsibility of preserving the church's purity for the people. It should be possible to get interaction between the church's base, the college of bishops, and the church's highest government (in the Roman Catholic Church the pope, in the Church of Sweden the state at this point in time). We know of developments in our churches that have not yet been finalized.

Since the practice of episkopé in our churches is primarily tied to the office of bishop, it seems to us a self-evident consequence that the bishop not only can but ought to be seated in agencies for planning and leadership on regional and central levels. Of course, the lay people should also be members and, through their representatives, have their seats. The task of leadership should not be tied to one person alone but be practiced in a personal, collegial and community-oriented manner.

In the Roman Catholic Church it is mainly a question of strengthening the co-responsibility of the laity in the church's life concerning, among other things, the liturgy and spirituality, and to take initiative for the witness of the gospel in the church and in the world today. In the Catholic Diocese of Stockholm the pastoral council consists of elected representatives from the congregations and from different diocesan agencies. Together with the bishop they deliberate on the larger questions of the diocese's business. The pastoral council takes some initiatives of its own on the diocesan level. A new congregational order that regulates the role of the pastor and the accountability of the congregational council was instituted in 1988. Through these new orders the Roman Catholic

Church has tried to meet justified demands from the laity to be fully informed and to share responsibility.

In the Church of Sweden, the movement seems to be in the opposite direction at present. According to the manual for the organization of the Church Assembly of 1983 the bishops are ex-officio members of the Doctrinal Board. But decisions about doctrinal matters are made in the Church Assembly where the bishops have no right to vote. Furthermore the Church Assembly is not bound by the findings of the Doctrinal Board. From a theological point of view this is a very dubious order where the bishops may not even formally share responsibility for doctrine. From a democratic point of view we could think of several ways to share the right to decide on the church's doctrine, such as the right to veto or an automatic remit back to the Doctrinal Board when the Board and the Church Assembly arrive at different conclusions. The same sort of solutions ought to be found for the place of the bishops when making decisions in other important areas of life in the church. The episcopate is not necessarily a threat to "common democratic order."

As we already have mentioned, conditions in our churches are different. However, it is true for both that the bishops are appointed to serve not against, but for and with, the people of God. Within the people of God and within a church that also knows democratic forms of government, the office of bishop is a gift for unity, in working together for calling and sending.

IV

CONCLUSIONS AND OUTLOOK

Introductory Remarks

1. The Swedish dialogue group has gratefully received the results of the theological discussions between the Catholic Church and various Lutheran churches from different places around the world. In our discussions we have concentrated on the office of bishop, a subject that has not earlier been singled out for special attention in other dialogues.

2. One problem is how to apply the results of dialogue in the life of the church (see chapter 1 of this report). The theological commissions have reached a high degree of unanimity on many issues that formerly divided our churches. For instance, concerning the 450-year-old controversy over justification we now have a far-reaching consensus. But the ecclesiastical structures do not change, although the theologians question whether the remaining doctrinal variations really need divide the churches. The theological convergence ought to be followed by acts bringing our churches closer together. To achieve such convergence between the Church of Sweden and the Roman Catholic Church, a new commission should be charged to suggest a practice that gives adequate expression to the present stage of the theological situation.

3. In our Swedish dialogue we have had the advantage of a common heritage from the past. We think not only of the early church but refer also to the later medieval church up until the Reformation. The Roman Catholic Church and the Church of Sweden claim a basic continuity with that church in terms of the content of faith, the sacramental life and the essential organization of the church.

At the Reformation the Church of Sweden broke juridically with the pope and the Catholic Church. But the Church of Sweden does not consider itself a new or different church. It claims that it is the reformed medieval catholic church of the country. The Roman Catholic Church has also stressed, at Vatican II, that the church must constantly reform itself (*perennem reformationem indiget*, UR 6).

Our task was to clarify and to formulate the basic convergence in our conceptions, to indicate lines of development on both sides during the centuries and to judge whether those have brought the churches closer together.

4. With regard to the office of bishop, we have stated that the Church of Sweden, more than other Lutheran churches, has kept the medieval ecclesiastical organization. Today the office of bishop has great importance for the Church of Sweden itself, and it has ecumenical significance, for instance in relation to other episcopal churches and to several younger churches on former mission fields. This does not mean, however, that our working group has reached a theological consensus or full unanimity, but our perspectives converge on most aspects of the bishop's office. We discern possibilities to come still closer to one another in a continued dialogue.

Methodological Questions

5. We have written the report together and all the members of the group vouch for the substance of the text. Also though individual members have expert knowledge in various fields we have trusted each other. Even the parts of the text that describe how the Church of Sweden and the Roman Catholic Church differ in belief and historical development have been approved by us all. Only the excursuses have been signed by their individual authors.

6. We have not limited ourselves to documentary sources only (the Bible, creeds and confessions, texts from councils, etc.) so as to compare our systematic views as constructed from those sources alone. Rather, we begin by describing the emergence of the office of bishop during the course of history. As part of this description we touch on different historical texts, such as formulae for consecration. We have then systematized the historical material and formulated issues. Finally we have stated how we see the office of bishop. With such a method we have avoided being faced immediately by divergent principles of understanding and we arrived at more nuanced views and could discern certain overarching problems. Thereby it became possible for us to describe a common ground concerning the office of bishop, albeit with different interpretations. Thus our talks led to greater unanimity than we had believed possible when we began.

There is a built-in risk with this method. One might focus exclusively on the function of episcopacy and so pass over the question of its necessity and its place as a structural element of the church. This danger is real.

7. We also note one special difference. The Roman Catholic Church has over several centuries until now worked out a synthesis of its ecclesiology and its episcopacy. For the Church of Sweden, this is the first time it happens that a group of theologians reflects officially on various aspects of episcopacy in an ecumenical perspective. This circumstance leads to the serious question: does this mean that the office of bishop is essential for the Roman Catholic Church's ecclesiology but possibly not for that of the Church of Sweden, or not in the same way? In this document we have tried to answer that question (chapter 7).

8. We found that we could start from the same overarching view of the office of bishop, namely a sacramental view. This approach is unique in dialogue between the Roman Catholic Church and a church of the Reformation.

It should be stressed that it is really only during this century that the office of bishop has been clearly and definitely described in sacramental and not only in juridical terms - for the Roman Catholic Church at Vatican II and for the Church of Sweden in this report. Our talks are thus part of a greater, common, historical process in which our churches are coming closer together even theologically.

We admit, however, that this view can more easily be fitted into Catholic theology than into Lutheran theology. A possible hesitation on the part of the Church of Sweden is due not only to the fact that this starting point is unexpected but also to the fact that a Reformation theology of the Word is traditionally seen as incompatible with a (Catholic) sacramental theology. Yet we think that such expressions as "the efficacious word" imply the sacramentality of the Word and that the main perspective of our working group could find a ready audience in all churches. In a continued dialogue our churches should deepen this common starting point.

9. That the office of bishop is a historical reality means also that the view of the office is affected by historical development. Even ecclesiology is influenced by various organizational forms of society. Yet the determinative perspective should not be taken from such forms of society but must be grounded in the history of the people of God as depicted in the Bible.

Therefore we have added chapter 10 dealing with the office of bishop in contemporary democratic Swedish society. This is a new theme in theological thinking about episcopacy, for the Roman Catholic Church too.

10. We have left out one aspect of the theology of episcopacy that would require its own investigation, namely "the Office of Peter." According to the Roman Catholic Church, the pope is the first among bishops. But what this "first" means, and how the first bishop relates to the

other bishops and vice versa, is a complicated question that only in the last twenty years has begun to be penetrated. We have not been able to go into that issue but refer to other documents.

Summary of the Content of our Dialogue:

A. The Essence of the Church

11. We have a common starting point in our working group: the church is the work of the Trinity. The church is the people of God, the body of Christ and the temple of the Holy Spirit. In this community of believing and baptized people the kingdom of God is manifested. The mission of the church in the world is to be a sign of and an instrument for God's call to all humankind to salvation and unity.

12. We are also in agreement that in this church the divine and the human interact. The divine, invisible and holy life of the church is realized in human, visible and fragile forms.

In the past we have tried in different ways to lessen the tension that sometimes follows from this composite reality by putting an accent either on the visible side (Roman Catholic Church) or on the invisible side (Church of Sweden). But we realize that the two sides together make one reality.

13. We are able to state together that the church as a whole presents a structure that corresponds to the unity of the divine and the human in Jesus Christ and in the sacraments, namely the divine life realized in and mediated by human forms. We can therefore describe the essence of the church in a certain analogy with the mystery of Christ and call it the fundamental sacrament, just as Christ who, as the Word of God become human, can be called the primary or original sacrament. The Word and

the sacraments in their turn by the power of the Spirit make the gospel of life and salvation fully concrete in human words and symbols. We agree that it is through the ministry of the church that the believers partake of the holy Spirit through Word and sacrament.

We have arrived at this viewpoint from different paths. For the Catholics the sacramentality of the church has for a long time been fundamental. The Church of Sweden theologians recognize such a description of the sacramentality of the church to be true to the reality of their own church. Our common task is to deepen this view and make it accepted in both our churches.

14. Our common understanding is that this church, which is both divine and human, is "one, holy, apostolic, and catholic (or universal)." We confess these characteristics for God's church on earth. However, we have not pursued extensively how these characteristics of the church are affected by the fact that the church consists of frail human beings.

B. The Ordained Ministry

15. Our common starting point is that this church with its sacramental structure manifests itself as a living communion with Christ in the Spirit and, because of their baptism, all believers have received God's call to live a holy life, to spread the gospel and to serve each other. There are, therefore, many tasks, many talents and services in the church.

We agree that salvation in this church is mediated by a special, ordained ministry for the preaching of the Word and the administration of the sacraments. This ministry of the church has existed ever since the days of the apostles. This special ministry was essential then and it remains essential at all times and under all circumstances. In that sense it is constitutive for the church. Thereby we

want to say that the ministry is an essential structural element in the church which is itself constituted as a temporal reality in the world. From the basic sacramental essence of the church the ministry also gets its sacramental character; it can rightly be labelled as a sacrament.

At the same time we recognize how the tension between the vocation of all believers and the ordained ministry historically has often led to one-sided emphases. Unwise zeal or suspicion has led bishops and priests into hindering the people of the church from using their talents. Lay persons have likewise sometimes refused to acknowledge the legitimate authority of ministry to the holders of the office when they did not live up to their calling. By laziness and sloth both clergy and laity have neglected their tasks and given over their responsibility for the well-being of the faithful to others. Our common task is to affirm the role of both laity and ministers in the church.

16. We both agree that the ordained ministry is God's gift in and for the church and therefore not the personal possession of any individual minister. The general task of ministry is to lead the people of God (the pastoral ministry), by preaching the Word (the teaching ministry) and by celebrating the holy liturgy (the priestly ministry). In the past we have placed the accent differently. The Church of Sweden has stressed the teaching ministry, the Roman Catholic Church the priestly ministry. Today our churches must therefore take note of the unity of these aspects of ministry.

Furthermore, we hold that the ministry of the church represents the ministry of Jesus Christ. For that reason it stands vis-a-vis the congregation and has its own legitimate authority which the congregation does not control. But it stands also in the congregation in service to build up the body of Christ. Our churches must hold on to these two sides, acting on behalf of Jesus Christ and being

called by the church community, and guard against any one-sided emphasis on either.

We also agree that the special ministry of the church is a ministry of the Spirit with its special gifts of grace. These, however, ought not to overshadow the plurality of gifts from the Spirit among the people of God. The special ministry must be practiced so as to enhance rather than to marginalize the participation of all God's people in their co-responsibility. Our churches must foster the participation and responsibility of the whole people of God, and of its ministers, in their mutual and loving cooperation.

17. We agree that both our churches can state that the ministry as such has sacramental character *de facto*, although such language is not part of the Church of Sweden tradition. We agree on the basis of our analysis of the inner structure of the church as a divine and human institution - a structure also manifested in the ministry. We find this view corroborated in the historical and liturgical documents of the Church of Sweden on which we report.

We are aware that the different terminologies in our two traditions safeguard different sides in the understanding of ministry. When it is said that ministry is sacramental, it is to stress that God acts through this minister, this human being. When one hesitates to use such language it is to stress that it is God, primarily, who acts and not a human being. By a sacramental view of ministry we mean to say that the divine really works in and through human beings, but also that people cannot have the divine at their own disposal. In order to avoid and avert one-sidedness we encourage both our churches to deepen the trinitarian and ecclesiological perspectives on the essence and mission of ministry.

C. The Office of Bishop

18. In our working group we hold as a starting point that the ministry of the church is one, instituted by divine ordinance. We agree also that its structure is threefold with bishop, priest and deacon having different tasks in the same sacramental ministry. This structure has existed since ancient times and during this century both our churches have rediscovered it as valuable and effective also today. We think that the old disagreement about whether the ministry is one or threefold is a thing of the past, even if the relationship among the three sections needs further theological reflection.

Toward that end theologians should consider whether the division of the one ministry in three is essential or necessary, or useful or merely a matter of fact.

19. It seems self-evident to us that the three different forms of duties within the ministry do not mean, theologically speaking, that the three ordinations that follow upon each other bring with them heightened personal dignities. They are rather a gradation between local and regional duties in accordance with the economy of salvation. When in the Roman Catholic Church the regional office of bishop is considered sacramental ministry in its fullness while priests and deacons are limited in its scope, it should be remembered that it was so stated explicitly only in this century in the Roman Catholic Church. The protests of the Reformers were not aimed at this new way of describing the office of bishop in the Roman Catholic Church.

Renewed talks are therefore needed to analyze the theological meaning of this new approach and its consequences (e.g., how the three sections are related to each other within the economy of salvation). The main question is not the difference in rank but in the gifts of grace and the duties.

20. We agree that from a historical perspective the office of bishop can be explained by the church's need for successors to the apostles, continuing their witness and leadership. Functionally this office can be explained by the church's need for an office of episkopé or regional supervision of the church, an office tied to specific persons. Both the Church of Sweden and the Roman Catholic Church have retained such office of bishop throughout the centuries.

We are in full agreement on the necessity of entrusting the function of episkopé, which is so essential for the church, to specific persons. Further dialogue is needed to clarify whether it is by divine institution or as a consequence of historical evolution under the guidance of the Holy Spirit that the bishops have become successors of the apostles as shepherds of the church.

21. Together we see the pastoral ministry of leading the people of God as the central duty for bishops and we hold that this duty cannot be exercised only by impersonal collective structures but requires personal authority and responsibility.

Even so, the office of bishop can only develop as part of the whole church. Persons become bishops by being incorporated into the college of bishops, and as bishops they share responsibility for the unity of the whole church. The awareness of this shared responsibility is strong in the Roman Catholic Church but it is not entirely lacking in the Church of Sweden either. Furthermore, a bishop cannot exercise episkopé in his diocese if he does not let his priests, deacons and all the baptized believers share in responsibility for the gospel. This aspect of the office has a long tradition in the Church of Sweden. During the last decades it has been stressed also in the Roman Catholic Church.

Vatican II emphasized incorporation in the college of bishops as an essential dimension of the office, and did so

more strongly than had been done during earlier centuries. In the Church of Sweden this aspect of the office has so far remained marginal. There are, however, signs indicating a common theological development in the future along the line of "collegiality."

D. The Consecration of Bishops

22. Together we take for granted that nobody has the right to become a bishop without being called and tested for this ministry in the church. It is the church in its various parts that is to appoint bishops. The calling process has varied in our two traditions.

There are still unsatisfactory features of this process, both theologically and practically. Above all, there is this question of how ecclesiastical organs are to cooperate and express that they are vehicles for the Holy Spirit.

23. We agree that the call to the office of bishop is completed by consecration, or ordination, which is a sacramental act. We hold that consecration inducts a person not only into special tasks but into the whole ministry of bishop.

We wish therefore that appointed bishops would refrain from practicing even their jurisdictional power before they have been consecrated.

24. We believe that the liturgy for consecration should by its structure and shape make apparent both the action of the Holy Spirit and the concern of the whole people of God. Both our traditions ordain by the laying on of hands and praying for the gift of the Spirit. Incorporation into the college of bishops is made more visible through co-consecrators and assisting bishops. The participation of the people of God is also expressed in various ways.

Liturgical rites for consecration are still under development. In the future they may make it more clear that the

office of bishop essentially involves the duty to be a shepherd for the people of God and to safeguard its unity.

25. Together we want to emphasize that the consecration of a bishop, like every other ordination, is a once-only event that brings with it certain lifelong power and authority. In principle and in its liturgical form the act of consecration should be distinct and separate from acts of installation or induction.

E. The Apostolicity of Ministry

26. We agree that the apostolicity of the church, on the one hand, has its source in the living and present Lord (the sacramental perspective) and, on the other, is made concrete through historical continuity in the abiding structure of the apostolic church (the historical perspective). There are many elements within this apostolic tradition. The most important among them are doctrinal succession, continuity of the sacramental life and apostolic succession of ministry. In these elements the sacramental and the historical perspectives complement each other.

Concerning the succession of ministry, the double view is summarized in the expression that the minister represents Jesus Christ and is the successor of the apostles. Since such terminology is unfamiliar to the Church of Sweden, our theological conversation must probe more deeply into this aspect of ministry.

27. For us the doctrinal succession means that the apostolic witness cannot be mechanically repeated but must be mediated and interpreted anew for every age. The succession of ministry is for both our churches an instrument for and a sign of the faithfulness of the apostolic witness. Traditionally the Roman Catholic Church, more than the Church of Sweden, has stressed the collective responsibility of the bishops (bishops together with the pope). The Church of Sweden, more than the Roman Catholic

Church, has stressed the duty of all believers to test the authenticity of the witness. While the Roman Catholic Church ties the apostolic succession primarily to the office of bishop, the Church of Sweden ties it to the church's undivided ministry.

We are aware, then, that our theological interpretations are converging but do not coincide, mainly because the starting point on the one side is the office of bishop and on the other the undivided ministry. Thus we have not yet reached full agreement in our understanding of apostolic succession.

28. We agree that normally bishops ordain bishops, priests and deacons. The episcopal succession is therefore the standard procedure for the transmission of the apostolic ministry. This is so since in both our churches the function of episkopé is tied to the office of bishop.

Such has been the practice in both churches with some lesser or greater historical exceptions. We have concluded that the exceptions are not of essential importance, but an analysis of them may point out certain theological differences.

29. We agree that the collegiality of bishops is one of the strong links for the unity of Christ's church on earth. This collegiality goes beyond national borders. We also agree that collegiality must take expression in concrete and lasting forms.

For the Roman Catholic Church the essential form is the college of bishops around the Bishop of Rome who is seen as the successor to the Apostle Peter. The Church of Sweden has through history repeatedly rejected the papacy on several grounds. Hence the Church of Sweden has greater difficulty finding a form for global collegiality even when the idea is present. Here is an area in need of future penetration and conversation.

30. We recognize that both the Roman Catholic Church and the Church of Sweden claim to share in the apostolic succession. But we have not achieved its mutual recognition. The Church of Sweden acknowledges the claim of the Roman Catholic Church but the Roman Catholic Church has not to this day acknowledged the claim of the Church of Sweden, due to the schism of the Reformation. Furthermore, the Church of Sweden holds that it is not necessary that the ministry of other churches and communities be incorporated into the historic episcopacy in order to be fully recognized.

Such differences depend on diverse views concerning how the church's apostolicity is to be manifested in concrete form.

The formal demands set by tradition for a valid apostolic succession have been linked too one-sidedly to the consecration (right *forma*, right *materia*, right *intentio*). But it has been our common discovery that succession has a much wider implication, namely oneness with the universal church. Only so can we understand rightly the expression *defectus sacramenti ordinis* which nowadays is translated "defects in the sacrament of orders," i.e., a lack of unity with the church universal. We are convinced that such insights have opened possibilities, hitherto unknown, for making apostolicity fully visible.

F. Ministry and Democracy

31. We agree that political democracy in a modern society must not be allowed to encroach upon the sovereignty of the gospel or the commandments of Jesus to which the whole church and its leaders in particular must submit themselves.

32. We also agree that the church as a sacramental community must have institutional forms that indicate the particular nature of the church in such a way that the

people of God and their leaders can fulfill their God-given calling without interference in their respective vocations.

33. We note that there can be various models for cooperation between ministry and laity. We thus acknowledge the particular responsibility of the laity to function as an "independent" partner in responsibility and planning for the church.

While the Roman Catholic Church is establishing better forms for co-responsibility and collaboration within the people of God, we think that the Church of Sweden at present one-sidedly stresses the right of the elected lay representatives to decide in the church. The responsibility of the ministry to decide in doctrinal and other matters is in serious jeopardy. This tendency is contrary to sound democracy or to the notion of shared responsibility within the people of God.

34. We agree that the task of leadership in the people of God should be worked out on a personal, collegial and community-oriented basis. The office of bishop ought not to be looked upon as if it were in opposition to the people, or a threat to democratic forms, but as a gift to the church for the sake of unity. The pastoral duty includes the duty to encourage cooperation in the church.

G. Conclusion

35. The convergence concerning the office of bishop described above ought to stimulate our two churches to continue their theological dialogue. Our common view of the church and its ministry could be further developed and deepened. The results of our theological talks should already now lead to a wider cooperation between our churches. We will also refer to the document *Facing Unity* from the dialogue between the Lutheran World Federation and the Secretariat for Promoting Christian Unity. That document proposes many ideas for cooperation, including some at the level of episcopacy.

EXCURSUSES

THE SWEDISH CHURCH ORDINANCE 1571 AND THE OFFICE OF BISHOP IN AN ECUMENICAL CONTEXT

By Sven-Erik Brodd

The ecumenical awakening in the Church of Sweden at the beginning of the twentieth century coincided with a growing awareness of the church's identity and special heritage. This development is intimately related to one man, Archbishop Nathan Söderblom. His ecumenical and pastoral program, often labeled "Evangelical Catholicity," had the episcopacy as one of its cornerstones. His reason was the Church Ordinance of 1571 (CO) which he reintroduced to Swedish church life as canonical. Actually, the CO had been severely questioned and new church orders had been proposed. However, it had not been abrogated and much of its content was part of the identity of church life in the Church of Sweden - e.g., the ordination rites. After Söderblom and up till now, the CO has been the subject of research and studies and it is really very important for the now proposed Church Ordinance of the Church of Sweden.

The Historical Context of "Episcopacy" in the Church Ordinance

Research dealing with Reformation history in Sweden could in earlier days be characterized by its harmonizing of the theological and churchly developments both in Germany and Sweden. In fact, there was tension between the periods of strong German influence and of the less radical reformism of Sweden.

The Reformation period in Sweden (1527-1593) was a long process. It transformed the whole Church Province of

Sweden-Finland. During that period the historic episcopate was maintained.

Between 1539 and 1543 Gustavus Vasa, the king, surrounded by German advisors, tried to abolish the episcopacy and to introduce superintendents in accordance with the situation in Germany. During that period Laurentius Petri was Archbishop but had fallen into disgrace with the king. The king's church policy led to uprisings and he was forced to maintain the episcopacy. The bishops were given their canonical power by the king and in the official state documents between 1543 and 1569 they are called *ordinarii*, with the use of medieval terminology. Already in 1561, shortly after the death of Gustavus Vasa, Laurentius Petri presented a proposal for a Church Ordinance in which the importance of the episcopacy was stressed as being an irreplaceable order of the church. This most certainly happened in regard to the archbishop's earlier experiences.

The importance given the CO in Swedish church history is clearly linked with the church's varying periods. In times of strong German influence it was given less notice, but in periods that stressed Swedish identity and its specific church history it played a more important role. The fact is that the CO, written by Archbishop Laurentius Petri is, in its first version probably from 1561, an expression of the special Swedish Reformation and a reaction against the earlier times of German influence during this Reformation period.

When Laurentius Petri died he had been commissioned to write a special confession for the Church of Sweden, a *confessio suecana*, an equivalent to the German Reformation confessions. It was never finished and in 1593 the Church of Sweden adopted the Augsburg Confession and the CO.

The basic confessional statements on the episcopacy that determine the Church Order in the Church of Sweden, as written in the CO, were approved at a synod in 1572 and again adopted and approved at another synod in 1593.

The Episcopacy in the Church Ordinance

The central text in the CO that refers to the episcopacy at some length is translated by John Wordsworth, as follows:

Episcopus, or Superattendens, is in Swedish rendered Tillsynsman (overseer), and for this reason every priest was also so called in the Scriptures, because he ought to have oversight or superintendence over those that are under his government, that things may go well and Christianly with them, as St. Paul says: 'Take heed unto yourselves and to all the flock in which the Holy Ghost has made you bishops, that is overseers.' For the distinction which now exists between bishops and simple priests was not known at first in Christendom, but bishop and priest were all one office, as we may observe in many places of St. Paul's writings; yet before very long the distinction was so made that the man who had only one congregation in his charge kept the name of priest, while he who had government over several congregations together with their pastors or priests, received the name of Episcopus.

And the reason (according to St. Jerome) for this order was that at the period when Christianity began to grow and increase, so that even in one town were several congregations, everyone of which had its own particular bishop or parish priest, it came to pass (as is generally the case under such circumstances) that variance and dissension arose between these Bishops or church priests, and so it sometimes happened that the same Christian congregations received notorious damage. But in order that this calamity might be stayed and stilled, the aforesaid congregations and their bishops and pastors came to an agreement that one bishop among them should be chosen, who should have superintendence over all the rest, and power to order and provide, both as regards the priests and their congregations, that things might go better and more correctly. And the man who was thus chosen

retained the name of bishop, but the rest remained with the name pressbitter, priest, etc.

Therefore, since this ordinance was very useful and without doubt proceeded from God the Holy Ghost (who gives all good gifts), so it was generally approved and accepted over the whole of Christendom, and has since so remained and must remain in the future, so long as the world lasts, although the abuse, which has been very great in this as in all other useful and necessary things, must be set aside. For, as regards the rightful office of a bishop, which consists in preaching God's Word and having oversight over them that are in his charge, so that they too preach aright, and behave themselves properly, this the bishops, who have been for a long time past, have let drop, and in its place have cumbered themselves with worldly things, yea and with things that serve for just no other purpose than mischievous misbelief, such as the manifold Jewish, and heathen consecrations (wixler), baptism of churches and bells, etc.

So now must a bishop have oversight over all that are under his government, especially the clergy, that they may rightly and duly set forth God's word among the common men, rightly administer the sacraments, preach and hear the catechism at the proper season, hear confession when it is proper, exhort and bring the people common prayers, visit and console the sick, bury the dead and faithfully and diligently perform all else that the ministry of the Church and the priestly office justly demands.

Interpretation of History

To describe the historical development, the CO follows St. Jerome who says that "the distinction which now exists between bishops and simple priests was not known at first in Christendom but bishops and priests were all one office, as we may observe in many places of St. Paul's writings" (p.161).

When the churches in the various cities began to grow, several new local churches were established. In order to maintain the unity of the church, and good relations between the congregations and their ministries, "congregations and their bishops and pastors came to an agreement that one bishop among them should be chosen, who should have superintendence over all the rest and power to order and provide, both as regards the priests and their congregations" (p. 161). Here the CO reflects the opinion which was most common during the late Middle Ages in the western church.

The description of the historical development is not present, as it was in the continental church ordinances, as evidence of the possibility for presbyterial ordinations. The question of presbyterial orders is not raised in the CO as a possible alternative to the episcopacy. The writings of St. Jerome are not used as normative interpretations but as a model for historical explanation. The normative interpretation is done by the CO itself. The historical development is connected to theological reflection on the church's ordained ministry, called the ministry of preaching (*predikoämbetet*), by which is not meant merely the ministry of the local preacher but the ordained ministry as such. The ministry of preaching in the CO is a theological term, not a canonical one. There are, according to the CO, two orders in that ministry, the order of bishops and the order of priests.

Episcopacy in the New Testament

If the church's ministry was once undivided and bishops and priests had one and the same ministry in the local church, then the word bishop in the New Testament means supervisor and in that sense both the parish priest and the diocesan bishop can be called "bishop": "Episcopus or Superattendens is in Swedish rendered overseer, and for this reason every priest was so called in the Scriptures, since he ought to have oversight or superintendence over those who were under his government" (p. 159).

According to the CO, episkopé and superattendens can have a double meaning: both priests and bishops exercise overview and the office of bishop.

But, if we thus find the undivided ministry of the church in the New Testament, we also find there the diversified ministry and the CO refers to Titus 1:5 as an example of a diocesan bishop. This example is given relevance for the actual ministry of the bishop in the CO: St. Paul sent Titus as a bishop to ordain priests in Crete and to exercise episkopé over the priests in the cities of that land (p. 164).

Episcopacy as a Gift of the Holy Spirit

The distinction that is held between the order of priests and the order of bishops, and thereby between those orders themselves, is "very useful and without doubt proceeded from God the Holy Ghost (who gives all good gifts)..." (p. 162). Here the possible interpretation is that the gift from the Holy Spirit means charisma. There is a similar expression for the ordained ministry, called a "divine order and gift" (p. 139). In other writings, Laurentius Petri parallels the divinely instituted monarchy and the episcopacy, a tough message, indeed, to a king who wanted to abolish episcopacy.

The Universality of Episcopacy

When the CO describes the order of bishops as "approved and accepted over the whole of Christendom" (p. 162) it indicates the catholicity of the Swedish independent national church. It becomes obvious when the CO declares that "this ordinance" (i.e., with bishops) is a gift from the Holy Ghost, is universally accepted, has its origin in the New Testament, "and has since so remained, and must remain in the future, as long as the world lasts" (p. 162).

There is an expression of central importance about the "usefulness" of the order of bishops. This is not to be seen as a relativization of importance. Because those useful orders that are in common "in the whole of Christendom," are "not dispensable" (p. 8).

Election and Ordination of a Bishop

In the CO a process is described for "making a bishop," which is composed of three stages: election, confirmation and ordination (p. 168). The electoral assembly consists of clergy and laymen, probably from the diocese. After the election, the bishop elect is sent to the king who confirms the election. Remarkably enough, the CO does not indicate that the king cannot approve the outcome of the election. After the confirmation the bishop elect "shall...by another bishop, one or more, publicly be ordained by imposition of hands" (p. 168). Thereafter, the CO gives a rite of ordination of bishops (pp. 169-173).

The Exercise of Episcopal Power

The diocesan bishop has, according to the CO, a rather autocratic position. No capitular body is mentioned and the role of the king in the ruling of the diocese is not presupposed. The bishop has the traditional *potestas magisterii* and is supposed to make tours of inspection (*visitationes*) in his diocese and lead the convocation of clergy. He has also the exclusive power to ordain priests (*potestas ordinis*). The candidates for the priesthood are sent to the bishop by the electing parishes. The bishop can reject their election, ordain another priest and send him to them. As part of the *potestas iurisdictionis* the bishop is the judge in cases of crimes and heterodoxy among the priests, also in cases related to matrimony and concerning crimes that could result in excommunication.

INTERPRETATIONS OF THE CHURCH ORDINANCE IN AN ECUMENICAL CONTEXT

The theological meaning of the episcopacy was, with few exceptions, of no importance to the isolated national "Church of Sweden," an expression adopted during the eighteenth century. In encounter with the Protestant Episcopal Church in the USA in the nineteenth century, and in dialogue with the Church of England, the Church of Sweden has officially

claimed the historic episcopate as a gift of the Holy Ghost to the church and that it has ecumenical significance. Representatives from the Church of Sweden have sometimes had difficulties dealing with episcopacy in an ecumenical context. From time to time this is indirectly reflected in ecumenical documents. It is therefore not accurate to say, as in the Lutheran-Catholic dialogue in the USA, that "preservation of the pre-Reformation episcopal structure" can be regarded as "a fortunate historical development" in the Church of Sweden, "meaningful in practical and ecumenical dimensions but not of especial theological significance."

Fundamental for the view on episcopacy in the Church of Sweden is the interpretation of the CO made in the conversations between the Church of England and the Church of Sweden. The attention paid to this statement in 1909, called "the Uppsala Confession," is due to the fact that it was seen as an authoritative explanation of the Swedish church's standpoint on episcopacy in an ecumenical context. At the same time it interprets the CO and the Church of Sweden in relation to the CA and the wider Lutheran Communion. This has in turn been ecumenically explored by Nathan Söderblom.

The Dialogue on Intercommunion between the Church of England and the Church of Sweden

In the response to the Lambeth Conference invitation to intercommunion, the Conference of Bishops of the Church of Sweden in 1923 stated on episcopacy:

4. The object of any organization and of the whole ministry being included in the preaching of the Gospel and the administration of the sacraments - according to the fifth article of the Augustana, God has instituted *ministerium docendi evangelii et porrigendi sacramenta*. Our Church cannot recognize any essential difference, *de iure divino*, of aim and authority between the two or three orders into which the ministry of grace may have been divided, *iure humano*, for the benefit and convenience of the Church.

5. The value of every organization of the *ministerium ecclesiasticum*, and of the Church in general, is only to be judged by its fitness and ability to become a pure vessel for the supernatural contents, and a perfect channel for the way of Divine Revelation unto mankind.

6. That doctrine in no wise makes our Church indifferent to the organization and the forms of ministry which the cravings and experiences of the Christian community have produced under the guidance of the Spirit in the course of history. We do not only regard the peculiar forms and traditions of our Church with the reverence due to a venerable legacy from the past, but we realize in them a blessing from the God of history accorded to us.

In the statement there is a certain tension between the solidarity with the Lutheran standpoint in general, referring to the Augsburg Confession Article V as interpreted then, and the standpoint of the Swedish reformation reflected in the CO. The reference to both is clearly made in the negotiations in 1909. The reports from that dialogue present an interesting description of the *ius humanum*, explicitly harmonizing the CA and the CO. The *ius humanum* is an order "not directly a command of our Lord but ordered by the Church accorded with the guidance of the Holy Spirit." Episcopacy is not seen as just "a venerable legacy from the past" but "a blessing from the God of history."

The Interpretation Given by Nathan Söderblom in a Speech at the Lausanne Conference in 1927

In the first World Conference on Faith and Order, the Swedish archbishop and ecumenist Nathan Söderblom interpreted the situation in the Church of Sweden:

Now a few words about our peculiar Swedish position. We have the so-called constitutional episcopacy, and the episcopal and presbyteral continuity without break is proved

beyond any doubt which, of course, in no wise makes our priestly office perfect.

The archbishop continued by referring to the CO, saying: "The value of episcopacy was accentuated by Laurentius Petri, Archbishop of Uppsala, in his Church Ordinance of 1571," and that the CO has "authority in our Church as a kind of particular symbolic book." He quoted the passage where, concerning the order of episcopacy, it is stated:

This law was most useful, and without doubt proceeded from God the Holy Spirit, the Giver of all goodness, it was also universally accepted and approved over the whole of Christendom, and has ever since been and ever must be so long the world endureth...

Söderblom interprets the standpoint of the Church of Sweden quoting "the Swedish Church Commission" which stated that:

The doctrine of freedom in no wise makes our Church indifferent to the organization and the forms of ministry which the cravings and experiences of the Christian community have produced under the guidance of the Spirit in the course of history. We not only regard the peculiar forms and traditions of our Church with the reverence due to a venerable legacy from the past, we realize in them a blessing from the God of history accorded to us.

When he then deals with "the doctrine of freedom" he does it not on the basis of what is necessary for the Church of Sweden but of what is necessary for Christian unity. Episcopacy is not a *sine qua non* for church fellowship:

The only way for us to decide what part of formulated doctrine and church organization is necessary for unity, is to consider its ability to bring the supernatural divine content to man, society and mankind.

According to Söderblom, the commission continues:

No particular organization of the Church and of its ministry is instituted *iure divino*, not even the order

and discipline and state of things recorded in the New Testament, because the Holy Scriptures, the *norma normans* of the faith of the Church, are not law, but vindicate for the New Covenant the great principle of Christian freedom, unweariedly asserted by St. Paul against every form of legal religion, and instituted already by our Saviour Himself, as for instance when, in taking farewell of His disciples, He did not regulate their future work by *a priori* rules and institutions but directed them by the guidance of the Paraclete, the Holy Ghost.

To Söderblom, "the guidance of the Holy Paraclete" is the main norm for church orders, not for instance the New Testament. And Church orders cannot set conditions for unity because that would reshape Christianity to "a form of legal religion." Church orders, including "episcopacy," are in principle inclusive and uniting, never exclusive and divisive. "So far about our peculiar situation and doctrine in the Church of Sweden," the archbishop concludes.

THE CHURCH OF SWEDEN MANUAL FOR ORDINATIONS: ORDINATION OF A BISHOP

Ordination Procedures

The church's ordination procedures are an expression of the way in which, through the Spirit within the people of God and for the sake of the gospel, Christ calls people to lifelong service. This calling is confirmed through the church's ordination.

The ordinations to bishop, priest and deacon all equally express the fullness of the gospel and the church's commission on the basis of this gospel, finding expression in word and action.

Traditionally our church uses the word "ämbete" (office) for the work of being priest and bishop. Other terms such as commission, call and service are used to designate the same calling by Christ to be a servant of his gospel.

Ordination of a Bishop

[The ordination takes place either as Ordination Mass or as High Mass, or as the Sunday Liturgy of the Word with ordination following.] The service takes place in Uppsala Cathedral or in the cathedral of the vacant diocese [and may take the place of the main service of the cathedral congregation.] The archbishop selects assistants and presides. Not only bishops but also priests, deacons and lay people may serve as assistants. In the case that the archbishop cannot officiate, the longest serving of the bishops presides.

The Ordination Mass for Bishops

[Unless otherwise indicated, the service is conducted according to the order of High Mass.]

Introduction

Hymn

[The procession (crucifer, choir, presenter of the insignia, bishop-elect, assistants, the archbishop and the notary) enter during the hymn or the introductory music.]

The Preparation

[One of the assisting bishops leads the preparation from the reading desk.]

B. In the Name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit.

Words of Preparation

[Either a short homily or one of the texts in the order for High Mass or the following:]

B. Blessed is the people that knows jubilation,
those who walk in the light of God's countenance.
From all languages and lands God gathers his people
uniting us by baptism with Jesus Christ, our Lord.
Christ has died for all and risen
that we with all the faithful shall live
with him in his kingdom.
With the whole church on earth
we are called by the Holy Spirit
to be sanctified and kept in a right faith.
Daily and richly God forgives us all sins,
setting us free to thank and praise, obey and serve him.
Let us pray and confess.

The confession of sins and prayer for forgiveness, the
absolution, and the prayer of thanks.

[The archbishop and two of the assisting bishops approach the altar.]

The Ordination

The Announcement

AB. Pursuant to election NN has been appointed bishop in the diocese of NN. The Letter of Appointment will now be read.

[The notary reads the letter. The bishop-elect proceeds to the altar rail.]

Reading from the Holy Scriptures

[One, or more of the assistants, reads one or more passages. (Suggested passages:

- A. Isa. 6:1-8; Rom. 12:4-12; Mt. 9:35-38
- B. Isa. 42:1-9; 2 Cor. 4:1-2, 5-7; Mk. 10:42-45
- C. Isa. 55:1-4; 2 Tim. 1:6-14; Jn. 10:14-16
- D. Jer. 18:1-6; 1 Peter 4:7b-11; Mt. 5:13-16
- E. Joel 2:26-32a; 2 Cor. 5:14b-20; Jn. 15:1-5, 16.))]

The Archbishop's Ordination Homily

The Promises

Introduction

AB. The church is God's people, Christ's body, a temple of living stones, Christ being the cornerstone. In this people of God, where we all are called through baptism to bring the gospel to the whole world, the bishop has a special calling.

A bishop shall have oversight over the diocese and its congregations.

He is responsible for God's Word being preached in purity and clarity,

for the sacraments being rightly administered

and for the works of charity being practiced according to God's will.

A bishop shall ordain and inspect,
visit, take and give counsel, listen, make decisions
and in all *his* work strengthen God's people
in the task of discerning the signs of the time
and of bearing witness to God's mighty acts for the whole
creation.

Holding the office of bishop, *he* shall live as a servant of
Christ and shall be a shepherd for God's flock.

With vigilance and wisdom

he shall serve the oneness in Christ

toward the church's edification and renewal in the Spirit
so that the love of God becomes visible in the world.

The calling of a bishop will now be entrusted to you.

Meet people tenderly and with respect.

Together with them seek the way God wills

and let it be your endeavor to let faith, doctrine and life
become one.

The Questions

AB. Will you in the Name of the Triune God accept the calling
to be bishop
and exercise it so that God is glorified,
the church built up and God's will brought to fulfillment in the
world?

E. Yes.

AB. Will you hold fast to the faith of the church, defend it,
and see to it that God's Word is preached in purity and clarity
as it is given in the Holy Scripture
and as the Confessions of our church bear witness thereto,
and that the sacraments are rightly administered?

E. Yes.

AB. Will you in your work follow, keep and protect the orders
of our church and foster oneness in Christ?

E. Yes.

AB. Will you so live among people
that you bear witness to God's love
and to the mystery of reconciliation?

E. Yes.

The Solemn Assurance

AB. Affirm now your promises before God and in the presence
of this congregation.

E. I, NN, will, with the help of God and by trusting God's
grace, live in accordance with these promises.

AB. May God, who has begun a good work in you,
bring it to completion so that his good will be done.
In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy
Spirit.

The Credo

AB. Confess now together with us our holy Christian faith
[The Nicene Creed].

The Prayer for the Church

[One of the assisting bishops says this prayer. Another prayer
may be used or the prayer can be freely made for the occasion.]

AB. Let us pray.

B. Holy Lord God, Holy mighty God, holy gracious Savior,
God eternal,

Cong. Have mercy on us.

B. For the power of the Spirit to be given to your church, for
unity and renewal
for the prospering of the gospel among all peoples,
we cry to you, O Lord.

Cong. Hear us, O Lord our God.

B. For servants devoted to the cause of your kingdom,
for blessings on those to be ordained to the service of the Spirit
in your church,
for joy and faithfulness until the end
we cry to you, O Lord.

Cong. Hear us, O Lord our God.

B. For justice and peace in the world,
for due respect for the gifts of creation,
for ways to alleviate the plight of poor nations,
we cry to you, O Lord.

Cong. Hear us, O Lord our God.

B. For consolation to the bereaved,
for strength to the weak and sick,
for recognition of the worth and dignity of every human being
we cry...

Cong. Hear us, O Lord our God.

B. O Lord, hear us before we cry,
we give you thanks for your power to give
far beyond what we can pray for, or think of.
To you our God belongs praise and glory and power
forever and ever.

Cong. Amen.

Hymn

[Those assistants who are to take part in the laying on of
hands approach the altar rail.]

The Prayer of Ordination

AB. In the Name of the Triune God,
by his call and in the communion of his congregation
we are now to ordain NN bishop.
Let us call on God in prayer:

O God, we give you thanks.
In your great love for us human beings
you sent your Son Jesus Christ as savior,
shepherd and high priest of our souls.
For our salvation he became obedient
unto death on the cross,
wherefore you have exalted him above every name.
In the world he gathers a people to serve you
that your name be hallowed
and your will be done.
You choose among us servants for your gospel
that people may come to faith,
the church be renewed and the creation restored.
From you we receive *him* who now is being ordained a bishop.

[**AB** and the assistants lay their hands on the head of the bishop-elect.]

AB. O Lord, come to NN with your Holy Spirit
And take *him* into your service as bishop in your church.

AB. O God, we now beseech you:

Cong. Give this your bishop steadfastness in serving the
gospel,
faithfulness and wisdom in caring for your people.
Give *him* the courage, strength
and patience *he* will need,
and keep *him*, O God, always close to you.
May *he* live ever more deeply in faith, hope and love.
Through Jesus Christ our Lord
who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and forever. Amen.

The Reception

[The new bishop stands while the choir sings "Veni Sancte Spiritus." *He* is given the cross, the cope and the mitre and receives from the **AB** the crozier and the Letter of Appointment. Then the **AB** says to the congregation:]

AB. In apostolic manner,
by prayer and the laying on of hands in God's name,
NN has been ordained a bishop.
Receive *him* as an ambassador for Christ.

[After the offertory hymn the celebration of the Eucharist (the **AB** presiding) begins with the *Sursum corda* and this Preface.]

Indeed you alone are worthy of our praise,
almighty Father, holy God.

We desire to praise you and bless you
through Jesus Christ, our Lord.

He is the shepherd and guardian of our souls,
who satisfies us with abundant gifts
and opens for us a future in your kingdom.

And so, with all your faithful through the ages and with all
the company of heaven we praise your name and sing in adoration: Holy, holy, holy...

[The only further special text for the ordination mass is a prayer after communion:]

B. O God, we thank you
for having fed us with the bread
that comes down from heaven
and having given us to drink
from the cup of blessing.

Help us faithfully to abide in communion with Christ
that we may fulfill our calling
to be the salt of the earth
and the light of the world.
Grant us to live with Christ forever.

Cong. Amen.

[During the final hymn the procession returns in the same order as it entered, except that the new bishop goes first among the bishops.]

List of Abbreviations

A	Assistant
AB	Archbishop
B	Bishop
Cong.	Congregation
E	Bishop-elect

[The italicized he/his/him when referring to the bishop elect indicates the anticipated alternatives they/them or she/her.]

ABBREVIATIONS

Accra	Faith & Order's report 1974 from Accra in Ghana
BEM	Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry, Sv: Dop, natt vard, ämbete
CA	Confessio Augustana, the Augsburg Confession
CIC	Corpus Iuris Canonici, den romersk-katolska kyrkolagen
GA	Das geistliche Amt
HB	den svenska kyrkohandboken
KO 1571	Church Order
KOF 1561	Church Order (ej bekräftad av Erik XIV)
LG	Lumen gentium, den dogmatiska konstitutionen om kyrkan
PL	Migne, Cursus completus patrum, series latina (de latin ska kyrkofäderna)
SOU	statens offentliga utredningar
UR	Unitatis redintegratio, dekretet om ekumeniken
VELKD	United Evangelical Lutheran Church in Germany

